

ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

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AND

Preparing the Soviet Trade Union Congress
The 30th Anniversary of the S.C.R.
Book Reviews, etc.

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ANTON CHEKHOV

Henry Gifford

PERHAPS even today the western reader tends to confuse Chekhov with his characters. Because the plays are a record of wasted lives, in which nothing is ever done properly, or done at all, while too much is said in tearful, excited voices, we infer that Chekhov himself was just such a broken-hearted incompetent, or at best a melancholy spectator who despaired of life. We remember that strange sound as of a broken string which makes itself heard in *The Cherry Orchard*, and take it as a symbol of Chekhov's own resignation and pessimism. A gentle, sad, ironic figure, low-voiced and hesitant, he stands there under an autumn sky. It is the fall of the leaf. Chekhov, alone after the midsummer blaze of Russian literature, bows his head and complains gently of the evil days that have now come. We are given to understand that he is a late-nineteenth-century decadent, charming in his own way but obviously *fin-de-siècle*. Those who liked to imagine the Russian character as childlike and unworldly, always laughing or crying, usually went to Chekhov for proof. The legend of a wistful Chekhov, the elegist of a dying civilisation, is still pretty widely accepted. These plays are sad, it seems, and must be acted slowly and poignantly. The humour in Chekhov? But it is such mournful humour—a faint gleam of sunshine that breaks through the mist and the evening rain.

Chekhov's world, there is no denying the fact, was decadent. The Emancipation of 1861 had undermined the power of the Russian aristocracy. The two last decades of the century, when Chekhov was writing, showed many signs of the approaching end. Political life was at a very low ebb; the fight seemed to have gone out of literature, though at the very end of this period Tolstoy was still to write *Resurrection*, and the name of Maxim Gorky was to become widely known, the harbinger of a gathering storm. But the general note was one of dreariness and banality. "There are moments", Chekhov confessed in 1888, "when I positively lose heart. For whom and for what do I write? For the public?" He went on to describe this public as "uneducated", and he doubted very much whether it had any need of him. "If we had criticism, then I should know that I put together material—good or bad, it is all the same—and that to people who have dedicated themselves to the study of life, I was as necessary as the star to the astronomer." The purpose of literature seemed to him a forgotten thing, whereas the mark of all truly great writers is that "they are going somewhere and they summon you there, and you feel, not with your mind but with your whole being, that they have some purpose, like the ghost of Hamlet's father, who did not come and disturb the imagination for nothing" Chekhov saw clearly enough that the impetus of the liberal sixties had long ago spent itself. A new urban society was growing up in the capitals, amid squalor and confusion, and the old pattern of life was falling to pieces, with few signs of anything to replace it. The old watchwords had almost become meaningless. It was a time when the currency of ideas had been debased, when banality was the rule.

But Chekhov, like the ghost in *Hamlet*, had a purpose in view. He did not accept this decadent world, but judged it in the light of certain positive values. What these were can be gathered quite simply from the plays and stories. Chekhov believed in decency, in humanity, in science, and in hard

work. Many Victorian liberals would have stated the same creed, but with Chekhov there is a difference. He had achieved these values painfully for himself. As a boy he had seen how easily self-respect can be downtrodden, and how necessary are discipline and incessant work if you are to make anything of your talent. Chekhov had no religion. He was (if the term can be freed from certain literary implications) a naturalist—one who studies the common experience of mankind in the actual world, and with no reference to a transcendental scheme. He believed in the precision and candour of science. It was not for nothing that Chekhov had trained as a doctor, and in all his writings he shows an unerring power of diagnosis. The ideal doctor is not devoid of sympathy, but he does not disclose it too readily, for fear of weakening the patient's morale. Under Chekhov's gentle attitude there lay an unflinching sternness. He was a rigorous lover of truth and science.

These values—of decency and humanity, science and work—are conspicuous in his writings, as they were in his own life. What the first means can be understood from the letter of good advice which he wrote one of his brothers, a letter which recommends all the unheroic virtues that make men tolerable to live with. Chekhov himself was distinguished by an unusual delicacy of feeling. His patience and tact with difficult or boring people were exemplary. In his writings he is always keen to detect any lack of decency towards others. There is the story of the old cabman who has lost his son, and finds his passengers one and all too busy to spare even a little attention to the tale of his sorrows. Professor Serebryakov in *Uncle Vanya*, who upsets the entire household and demands tea in the small hours, is a man utterly without decency. So are Ranevskaya and her brother in *The Cherry Orchard*, in their unfeeling attitude to old Firs, the family retainer.

But callous or flippant behaviour naturally evokes a milder protest than downright inhumanity. Chekhov lived in a brutal age: we have only to read Gorky's autobiography for corroboration. All forms of repression and blackguardliness are shown up in Chekhov's pages. There is the miller who harshly dismisses his old mother and by way of contrition calls her back to receive twopence; the retired soldier Prishibeev who appoints himself to pry into the morals of his village, keeping a list of those who sit up talking instead of going to bed; and, worse of all, "the man in a case", the grammar-school teacher who like Prishibeev glories in prohibitions and tyrannises over his colleagues. "Under the influence of such men as Belikov for the last ten or fifteen years in our town they have become afraid of everything. Afraid of raising their voices, of sending letters, making acquaintances, reading books, afraid of helping the poor or teaching people to read." It was hatred of inhumanity that caused Chekhov to break an old friendship by his support of Dreyfus, and that sent him on his long and dangerous journey to investigate the penal settlement at Sakhalin. Chekhov was no indifferent looker-on. He had little use for contemporary politicians, but he did not acquiesce in the order of things that made Prishibeev or "the man in a case" possible.

The hope of the future he saw in teachers and doctors, in men of science who are modest and work for the benefit of others in the face of every discouragement. He once told Gorky that he would like to build a sanatorium for village teachers. "If only you knew how necessary to the Russian village is the good, intelligent, educated teacher!" He wanted the teacher to be the first man in the village, to whom the peasants should take their questions. The truly great men for Chekhov were these nameless heroes, who brought light into dark places. Such was the doctor Dymov in one of the stories, whom his frivolous wife only recognised at his true worth when he was dead. Dymov's friend tells her: "He served science and he died on account of science. He worked like an ox day and night, and nobody spared him . . ." Astrov in *Uncle Vanya*, for all his failings, strives to fulfil the same ideal.

His experiences in the outbreak of typhus are Chekhov's own in the cholera epidemic of 1892. Chekhov too gave generously of his skill when it was needed, and was famous among the peasants round Melikhovo for his doctoring.

There are two notes that constantly recur in Chekhov's writing, and above all in the plays. The first is the call to break with the sordid and idle present, to begin a new life of work and self-sacrifice. This is what Sonya foresees in *Uncle Vanya*, "the long, long series of days and long evenings" spent working for others. It is the cry of Irina in *Three Sisters*, "We must work, work. We are unhappy and look on life so gloomily, because we don't know work. We come of people who despised work . . ." And the student Trofimov tells Anya the same thing in *The Cherry Orchard*: "To begin living in the present, we must first redeem our past, finish with it, and we can redeem it only by suffering, only by extraordinary, unceasing work." The other note is the recognition of a joyful future. Astrov in *Uncle Vanya* is always thinking of how "those who will live in a hundred or two hundred years' time will despise us for passing our lives so stupidly and tastelessly, they perhaps will find the means to be happy . . ." Vershinin in *Three Sisters* says the same: "In two or three hundred years' time life will be unimaginably beautiful, amazing." And the student Trofimov tells Anya that "all Russia is our garden", and says: "I have a presentiment of happiness, Anya, I see it already . . ."

Are these voices to be taken seriously? Trofimov is an impractical, dreaming student—at almost thirty; Vershinin a splendid talker who does nothing. Irina and Sonya are frustrated girls in front of whom lies a drab life of routine and neglect. Is Chekhov merely satirising the enthusiasm of pitiful escapists, or showing the pathos of aspiration in thwarted lives? It might seem so, until we look more closely. Chekhov himself believed in progress, in the better, more humane world that would one day be possible. He would have subscribed wholly to the words he put in Tuzenbach's mouth when he says in *Three Sisters*: "There is a strong and wholesome storm in the making, it is now at hand and will soon blow away from our society the idleness, the indifference, the prejudice against work, the putrid boredom. I shall work, and after some twenty-five years everyone will work. Everyone!"

Chekhov was always impatient when actors and audiences failed to see that his plays were comedies. Yet as such they must be taken. They are a kind of comedy that is touched at many points with sadness; but the sadness is that of Chekhov, not of his characters. He hates to see so much waste, boredom and idleness. Ranevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard* may conceive of herself as a tragic heroine, in her moments of clarity. But our tears would be vain: such people have never grown up, never faced their responsibilities. They are acting unreal parts, in a play that will soon be ended. *Uncle Vanya*, *Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard*—each closes with a departure. A way of life is being broken up; there is the sense of a new beginning to be made, after all the upheaval and the disquiet. Chekhov knew that the desperate world of his day could not long continue. He presented it in all its folly, its disregard of fact, its reckless indulgence, when he wrote his final statement, *The Cherry Orchard*. The place was sold, the family had gone, leaving disorder behind them, and the axes were already laid to the trees. But, as Petya Trofimov said, "all Russia is our garden".

THE Armenian State Publishing House has produced a two-volume *Selected Works* in Armenian. The Armenian State University and many institutes at Erevan, Leninakan and Kirovakan held memorial sessions and literary evenings. Public libraries in the Republic called "readers' conferences" to discuss Chekhov's works.

THE RETURN TO CO-EDUCATION

I

TEN years ago separate education for boys and girls between twelve and seventeen years of age was introduced in a number of cities and industrial settlements of the USSR. Children under twelve and students over seventeen were not affected, nor were children in the smaller towns and the countryside. Some 2% of all schools, comprising 12% of all schoolchildren, were in single-sex establishments at the beginning of 1954.

The question of whether education should be mixed or separate has been vigorously discussed, however, for a number of years. The fact that separation of boys and girls at particular ages, and in particular towns, was part of official policy did not deter critics. Last August their voice was loudly heard at parents' meetings and in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, which often raises controversial public issues.

When the Editor visited the USSR in December, responsible educationists made no secret of the fact that the trend of opinion was now decisively in favour of a return to universal co-education, and that it was only now a question of a careful analysis of the great mass of experience which had been assembled, to ascertain beyond any possibility of error or even doubt that the change was necessary.

The first article we print below, by one of the editors of *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, shows the problem as it was being discussed in August 1953. The second, revealing the considered opinions of the Academy of Educational Sciences in April 1954, reflects the result of the great debate.

II

LIFE SAYS SO

Nikolai Atarov

1. A GROUP of teachers has written at some length to the editors [of *Literaturnaya Gazeta*] on what the coming academic year offers to schoolchildren of the Butyrsky settlement on the outskirts of Moscow :

"... Two years ago, in one of the outer suburbs of Moscow, co-educational school No. 252 opened in a new building. It was at the time the only school in the whole area, and workers' families of the *Stankolit* and *Borets* factories, and the Ostankino state farm, hastened to send their children there, as it was near home.

Forming a children's collective is a complicated business in any case. It is even more complicated to unite boys and girls from segregated schools, where they get out of the habit of being together. Time and much effort were needed here to rally the komsomols and pioneers and to guide the forces of the children's collective against infringements of school rules.

Two years have passed. The boys and girls have begun to grow used to learning together. In the steady social interests of the collective life of the school, both respect and genuine comradeship have begun to develop. Discipline has noticeably improved. The children have been doing better at their lessons.

In the spring of 1953 there appeared a threat to all this. Strange though it may seem, with the good there came anxiety to the life of the area ; in the vicinity of our school another many-storeyed school building was completed. Next autumn there will be two schools functioning at Butyrsky settlement.

What sort is the other one to be ?

One fine day it dawned on teachers, parents and scholars that the fate of our school collective depended on what the new school was to be like. If it was to be co-educational, everything would remain as before. If it was to be a boys' school, ours would be a girls', and vice versa.

The parents have come out strongly in favour of mixed schooling. We teachers support this view. Having expended a lot of energy on the creation of the children's collective, we consider that for us to be threatened with the splitting-up of the school into boys' and girls' is educationally wrong, and we are asking for co-educational schools at Butyrsky settlement."

On receiving this collective letter from the teachers at school No. 252, the editors decided to send correspondents not only to Butyrsky settlement but also to several towns in various parts of the country—Kazan, Kuibyshev, Molotov, Ufa, and even remote Yakutsk.

Three years ago *Literaturnaya Gazeta* published Professor V. Kolbanov-sky's article *A Disturbing Question* (No. 29 of 1950), criticising the system of segregated schooling.* The article received mass support at the time. Teachers, parents and senior pupils who wrote to the editors were overwhelmingly opposed to segregated education. How popular is this system now that it has none the less been in existence for several years in the schools of some cities ?

Here is the answer life gives to that question.

For ten years now the country has had two educational systems : in a few dozen large towns there are some boys' schools and girls' schools as well as mixed schools, while in thousands of villages and in hundreds of small towns boys and girls continue to be educated together.

It is no exaggeration to say that the vast, the overwhelming, majority of boys and girls in our country are still being educated together. Without mentioning the smaller towns and villages, suffice it to offer a few figures : out of seventy schools in Cheliabinsk there are only twelve which have been reorganised for segregated education. There are in Stalingrad ninety-two schools, of which only six practise segregated education.

If you are wondering what trends are observable in the school system in the big towns, there are two conflicting tendencies to be noted.

On the one hand, everywhere in the big towns, when new school buildings are being erected, the RSFSR Ministry of Education invariably establishes segregated boys' and girls' schools. Thus last year in the town of Molotov, school No. 21, where boys and girls were being educated together, was transformed into a boys' school. The continual reorganisation of the schools is damaging public education in Molotov. Last year in nineteen schools in the town there were no standard time-tables and no properly staffed classes at the opening of the school year. And this year, for example, mixed school No. 92, where children from many schools were recently assembled, is to begin in the autumn to change over into a girls' school : on the instructions of the City Education Committee, girls only are to be accepted in class I. Yet here too, as at Butyrsky settlement, the teaching staff have been making no small effort

* See *Pros and Cons of Co-education*, by Brian Pearce, in *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (Autumn 1950).

to overcome the effects of artificial isolation. Plainly, however, someone among the local officials, supposing that the mere fact of separate schooling enshrines fairy-tale possibilities, decided to separate boys from girls once more—let them pay one another visits and meet at evening parties.

This transformation of mixed schools into boys' schools and girls' schools is also going on in a number of other towns.

On the other hand, however, surprising this may seem at first sight, the number of co-educational schools is in some towns not decreasing but, on the contrary, growing.

In recent years at Ufa many boys' schools and girls' schools (Nos. 2, 4, 12, 44, 45, 46) have become co-educational. This was achieved by the parents and was inspired by life itself. (When a new school is to be opened in Ufa, by the way, the inhabitants continue to request that it shall accept both boys and girls.)

In Kazan more than half the schools are co-educational. In Tatar school No. 113, where three years ago segregated schooling was introduced in the one building (boys in the right-hand classrooms, girls in the left-hand), the head and the teaching staff have obtained a merging of classes and the school has become co-educational. When the town committee of the party decided to call together several Kazan communist teachers to discuss this question, many educationists began ringing up and asking to be invited and allowed to speak. The general opinion on the need to abolish segregated education was voiced by the veteran Kazan teachers I. Abdrashitov, head of boys' school No. 24, and V. Gafarova, head of girls' school No. 81.

In Yakutsk this contrary process—the amalgamation of boys' and girls' schools—has been most noticeable. Here the general condemnation of the system of segregated schooling resounded with such force that the Ministry of Education of the Yakut Autonomous Socialist Republic itself presented the government of the Republic with an application to make the Yakutsk schools co-educational. And although in Moscow, at the RSFSR Ministry of Education, the Yakutsk comrades were cautiously advised to delete from the prepared project every argument that was "controversial", as the Moscow people described it, or concerned with educational ideology, and to retain only uncontroversial arguments (great distances between home and school, understaffing, and so on), nevertheless today, in 1953, the unavoidable difficulties of reorganisation having been overcome, the overwhelming majority of Yakutsk teachers already see the unquestionable advantages of co-education. Our correspondent was told as much by both M. Pripuzova, head of mixed school No. 7, and V. Skomorokhova, head of mixed school No. 8, as well as by many others. Among the older Yakutsk teachers and head teachers and such noted figures in public education as Z. Savvin, the Yakutsk ASSR Minister for Education, whom our correspondent interviewed, only one comrade, A. Makarov, head of seven-year school No. 6, denied that going over to co-education was a change for the better; in his opinion "boys need to be schooled in manliness and girls in womanliness".

"A woman should be skilled in cooking, sewing and mothercraft", explained comrade Makarov. "It was right to establish girls' schools, and it was a blunder to have changed them here in Yakutsk. Colleges for women ought to be set up too . . ."

Attention should be paid to this lone voice. He may be the only one, but he may in himself serve as a convincing argument for all those who object to the existence of boys' schools and girls' schools in our country. The mere existence of segregated education resurrects these antiquated views on women, even among teachers, who in this respect might well recall the text of article 122 of the Constitution of the USSR :

Women in the USSR enjoy equal rights with men in all branches of economic, state, cultural and social-political life.

Thus over a period of ten years hundreds of co-educational schools have been split up into boys' and girls' schools, while on the other hand a great many boys' and girls' schools have been merged again.

Mass transfers of pupils. Continual change in the management of schools. Uncontrollable desertion of teachers from boys' schools to girls' schools : and endless reinforcing of boys' schools by transferring experienced and strong-willed teachers to them.

Is all this disruption necessary ?

In any admissible disruption, the difficulties and the temporary inconveniences offer a way ahead, hold out hopes of benefits.

But the segregated school system, as experience has shown, offers nothing of advantage and presents no benefits. This opinion is almost unanimous. It is a fact that must be reckoned with.

What then does this opinion derive from ?

2. SEGREGATED education is unpopular among our people first and foremost because, as experience has proved, it conflicts with the equality of status of men and women and thereby dislocates the very structure of our life.

"My daughter's going to school next year. We were going past a girls' school one day, and she asked :

— Daddy, why are there only girls coming out of that school ?

— Because that school's only for girls, I replied. Boys have their lessons separately at another school.

— Why ? she asked again.

What answer am I supposed to give her ? Why is it ?"—A. Baibakov.

Readers' letters of this sort are simple and spontaneous but their content is profound.

The co-educational school has reproduced the character of the socialist epoch. Millions of Soviet people brought up in co-educational schools built socialism and showed the whole world during the war what our people, both men and women, were capable of when their sacred duty called on them to defend their socialist homeland. The principles of the Soviet school are indissolubly bound up with the whole practice of our society, with the very spirit of the socialist order. Our teachers brought us up in the spirit of Soviet comradeship—without distinction of sex or nationality—and this began in the co-educational school, from that memorable first day at school when boys and girls stood in pairs on the threshold of the classroom holding each other tightly by the hand.

In our Soviet women's large-scale and enduring conquest of every position in social and economic life—from the farm-tractor team camp to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in the sphere of exact science, in the public health service and in education, in works laboratories, at the wheel of harvester or aeroplane—in all this vast advance of millions of women the co-educational school played an invaluable part : it reduced the numbers of non-working women in the country, it absorbed into the national economy, into state activity, hundreds of thousands, millions, of women capable of combining a job with motherhood and the bringing up of children.

By stressing the differences between boys and girls and the variation in approach to them at school, segregated education has shown itself in the post-war years to be the seed-bed in which the most antiquated of views and survivals have begun to sprout. How can there be any benefits from this ?

In their vain attempts to find scientific-theoretical grounds for segregated education in the Soviet school, some theoreticians and practitioners in our schools have managed to import into this subject a wrong, unequal attitude towards men and women. In doing so, they set biological differences of the sexes above our common social aims and tasks. Talk began to be heard of women's incapacity for exact knowledge, here and there in girls' schools requirements in the teaching of mathematics, physics and chemistry have been appreciably slackened and draughtsmanship reduced to vanishing point. Talk began to be heard about woman's special sphere—the family circle, domesticity, motherhood—and this has admittedly had time to imbue some girls with a dependent attitude towards life. People began to assert that all this “special quality” in the education of women not only did not conflict with the principles of communist society but on the contrary was actually an educational advance by means of which recurrent problems of educating Soviet youth could achieve the best possible solution. No wonder some boys in boys' schools, transmuting in their own way all these views and sentiments, have begun to appraise a girl's worth merely by the length of her plaits!

Many facts show that in our higher schools also harm is being done by the spread of these views and sentiments. The dissociation arising from segregated education shows itself among first-year students. The segregated education system does particular damage where, as in our Central Asian republics, feudal survivals in the attitude towards women have not yet been wholly eliminated in all parts.

Segregated education has no great number of adherents in our country for the further reason that it runs counter to the principles of Soviet collectivism. The school is simply one of the first collectives in the life of a Soviet citizen. Kalinin, Krupskaya and Makarenko never let us forget this.

On this point, here is a letter from readers :

“ Learning at school, taking part in its social life, out-of-school work in the circles, games in leisure time, all this is work, a child's work, within a child's powers. It stimulates general interests, sets tasks, and creates obstacles that you overcome together.

And if work, that is joint social work, is considered a seed-bed for the germination and growth of healthy relationships, if joint work is the distaff on which fresh skills and good habits are continually being spun, if work is the unparalleled craftsman for putting a polish on the higher moral aspects of personality, then it must be admitted that segregated schooling for ten years of life deprives the boy and the girl, citizens-to-be, of the soil on which Soviet character and the Soviet collective flourish particularly well.

In short, as soldiers, we are for co-education !

— Private A. Yakovlev : Lance-Corporal A. Aglazov : Junior Sergeants V. Kibalnikov, K. Kosyrev, N. Shavrin.”

In sending this letter these Soviet Army people have formulated an important aspect of the question : the school stands in the front rank in the inculcation of Soviet collectivism. In hundreds of letters teachers and parents quote facts showing that in segregated schools the single-sex collectives (boys' or girls') have been showing less solidarity than those in co-educational schools.

Komsomol members write of the difficulties of work in a one-sided (boys' or girls') organisation. The atmosphere of the segregated school does not conform to the spirit of a pioneer detachment. And indeed, if the school, the pioneer organisation and the Komsomol are preparing for what is to be done in life—laying the foundations of Soviet collectivism—then what purpose is served by this temporary isolation in a person's life ? They are together in the crèches and in the kindergartens. Together they rejoice in their first toys,

together they learn to speak and sing, together they listen to stories and look at pictures in books. . . . And ten years later they are also fighting together, like Oleg Koshevoy and Ulya Gromova, for the happiness of the homeland, or are building its happiness in joint labour. Why then should they not, in that most precious time, their schooldays, the memory of which held something like a smile even for Gogol's Plyushkin, be together in one Komsomol group? And are there not young workers' schools where they study together? They are together at home, in the streets, in the children's camps, at the stadiums. From the school benches they go to universities, where they are again together.

What sort of progress can come from separating boys and girls?

But is it that all the shortcomings of the educational process under segregated schooling are perhaps outweighed by one special and vital advantage, namely the fact that it distracts boys and girls from any premature unwholesome attachments and fixes their interests firmly on their studies?

It is scarcely possible to accept here as an argument the preposterous view that separating boys and girls nullifies the mutual interest in each other emerging in consequence of physiological development. The whole of the last ten years' experience in hundreds of boys' and girls' schools, on the contrary, testifies definitely to the excessive growth of unwholesome manifestations of this interest. From various towns people write about the rise in boys' schools of shoddy boarding-school traditions: foul language, smutty stories, a cult of devil-may-care slovenliness, a false conception of loyalty, a false prestige for street-corner ringleaders, "manly views" on girls and women. Into the girls' schools there is penetrating a boarding-school cult of little intrigues, fashion-consciousness, affectations, "heart-throb notes". And in place of school friendships, where everybody's faults and merits are plain, "personal attachments", with their sometimes dramatic and tragic mistakes, are developing.

The mature generation of Soviet people, remembering their own schooldays, say:

"We saw nothing wrong in boys and girls being friendly; they had no need to skulk in alleyways, since they were learning in the same classrooms, and their affections were far from being governed by good looks or by dancing prowess at school parties. We took the lead from the best scholar not because he or she was a boy or a girl. And if the secretary of the Komsomol committee was a girl, the boys were not in the least humiliated. In the older classes, where youths and girls had reached the age when one is learning to feel, their innocent first loves simply helped them to be better, aroused and liberated all that is fine and best in man. And if we look farther, the beauty and stability of the family and of the love of mature people in later life grew out of schoolday friendships between boy and girl."

The voice of school doctors and the result of their observations must also be heard. This is what our reader S. Mostkova, a doctor, writes:

"Co-education is necessary in schools not as a half measure, that is not up to class 5 but up to school leaving, until childhood is over. As regards the peculiarities of physiological development in youths and girls, experience has shown that with correct upbringing, that is in co-educational schools, this transitional period is undergone perfectly quietly without any exaggerated curiosity.

Things are the less disturbing for being ordinary and customary. The everyday mingling of boys and girls creates a calm, clear atmosphere of friendship. I have not seen in a co-educational school such excitement as seizes boys and girls in segregated schools over school parties and especially private parties at home. . . ."

The preparing of a physically healthy younger generation capable of withstanding every trial is the school's responsibility and duty.

It is claimed that only in segregated schooling does physical culture take account of the peculiarities of boys and girls. This opinion is refuted by the experience of the many co-educational schools where physical culture receives attention. Care on this subject is, however, insufficient in many schools, and boys' schools among them. The educational authorities frequently display an incomprehensible neglect of the requirements of physical culture in schools. References to the special importance of physical culture in boys' schools, however, sometimes in fact conceal a total lack of attention to the question of the physical training of girls. Physical culture for youths only is inconceivable in our country! Girls too should be strong, dexterous and hardy. Did then the experience of the Great Patriotic War not show that women must be ready to defend the homeland? Tens of thousands of girls—partisans, orderlies, anti-aircraft gunners, signallers, pilots, snipers—took part in the battles. And in 1945 Kalinin said, turning to them:

“You have conquered equal rights for women in yet another field, in the direct armed defence of the homeland.”

Thus life itself, year by year comparing in the practice of teacher and school the merits and demerits of the two educational systems, suggests that experience of segregated schooling has gained nothing for the cause of the communist upbringing of the younger generation, and has lost much.

3. RECENTLY I met a young schoolmistress, who joined in our discussion on the two educational systems and said in ringing tones:

“Well, I'm in favour of segregated education! And I'll prove it!”

This caused a sensation among those of us taking part in the discussion: reasons are certainly needed! The serious lack of reasons is indeed only too apparent: in fact, in ten years not enough reasons have been collected to make even a small pamphlet; no such pamphlet exists on the merits of the segregated school or on the methods of work in boys' or girls' classes!

The young schoolmistress admittedly did offer reasons. Theoretical ones, even. She said, for example, that boys in a co-educational class, through the society of girls, developed passive-negative reflexes; she even cited the work of Pavlov. Of girls she said that they seemed to feel freer without boys, not so self-conscious. Of teachers she said that they, both men and women, found it easier to teach certain subjects, biology for instance, if the scholars were of one sex. And so on and so forth.

We listened, and asked:

“Well, that being so, which do you personally prefer, a boys' school or a girls'?”

“What do you mean? I've told you I prefer segregated schools.”

“Yes, but we mean in practice. Where would you prefer to work?”

“In a girls' school, of course”, exclaimed the supporter of segregated schooling, not giving herself so much as a second to consider it. “I *am* working in a girls' school.”

“But why? What's wrong with a boys' school?”

“What a question! You're joking.”

She burst into a ringing laugh and began to talk of the “horrors” of boys' schools. A friend of hers teaches in one. In class 6, in a history lesson, there was a sudden audible exclamation of: “Dope!”

“And it was impossible to discover the culprit! You see? And when Masha was looking round to see whose the voice was, an audible voice sounded again from an unknown source: ‘Look, she's gone squint-eyed!’ And so the lesson proceeded.”

A similar speech was made recently at a teachers' meeting in the Kazan city committee of the party by A. Avksentiev, head of boys' school No. 5.

“In my opinion,” he said, “no great harm will be done if we retain the segregated schools. It is easier for us to work with pupils of one sex. Only boys’ schools should be given priority, their reading rooms should be better equipped, and gymnasiums built. . . . And teachers must be specially trained for boys’ schools. . . .”

Such is the defence of segregated schooling !

Need it be said that the educational successes of a school, its progress and discipline, are determined not so much by what type of school it is—boys’, girls’, or mixed—as by the talents, cultural background and team spirit of the teaching staff, by the efforts and zeal of the head of the school ? We have some magnificent schools—boys’ schools, girls’ schools, and mixed schools. Yet there is not a teacher in the country who would not admit with alarm that in most boys’ schools discipline has slackened, and working in them is difficult.

An honoured RSFSR schoolmistress, P. Novikova, spoke of this at Kuibyshev :

“I was given”, she said, “a score of backward boys from a boys’ school. Some of them were said to be completely hopeless. They landed in a mixed class, however, and by the end of the year I passed them out with good marks. You cannot imagine what a good influence girls in the class can have on boys, even on the most badly behaved !”

The head of a boys’ school in the town of Molotov, B. Fukalov, claims :

“In a co-educational school progress is better. A silent emulation goes on in class all the time. You may not even notice it, but the girls do not want to be outdone by the boys, who do not like to get ‘Poor’ in front of the girls. In the technical groups both sexes study with equal interest.”

All this is perfectly obvious. Ask any country teacher, and he will tell you how well boys and girls learn when they come in winter from remote villages and settle down in the one house to prepare their lessons together. What a fine friendliness is established there !

Only joint successes in learning, the joys and sorrows of social life, fully reveal the creative capacities of boys and girls and iron out the faults on one side or the other. It is the “mingling of interest”, as teachers say, that shapes the activities of the co-educational school collective. It is in such a collective that the bad traditions of “backing each other up” vanish and school patriotism and a sense of responsibility for the honour of the class develop.

The consideration of all these facts leads to the conviction that in the experiment with segregated schooling the educational process, too, has gained nothing and lost much.

4. HAVING drawn this important general sketch of the life of the town school as it has taken shape these latter years, it is as well in conclusion to dwell on some organisational questions.

It has become hard to plan the school network : the zone of operation of each individual school has widened. An “overlapping” of boys’ and girls’ schools has developed. Many of them are overloaded, while there are others where there are no more than fifteen to twenty boys or girls in a class. Segregated schooling is expensive : the financial authorities frequently demand the merging of parallel classes.

Boys’ schools and girls’ schools are being supplied with the best buildings. They are being given priority over co-educational schools, they are continually being strengthened with experienced staff and good head teachers. Yet in spite of this, boys’ schools, owing to the difficulties of working in them, have in recent years been less well provided with personnel than girls’ schools or mixed schools. The teaching collective in girls schools is more stable.

When you discuss segregated schooling with parents or read their letters to the press, there is one more point that emerges sharply :

“Close by our house”, writes M. Strelnikova from Dnieprodzerzhinsk, “there are two schools, but one is not in our borough, and the other, which is, is for boys. So I am obliged to send my daughter to school No. 23, a long way off. You send her off and you’re worried to death : to get to school she first has to cross the tram-lines and then the railway.”

For large families there is a further worry : time has to be found to visit both the school the sons attend and the one the daughters attend. People have little spare time, and the link between home and school is unwillingly weakened.



THERE is no problem which could not be solved—and was not solved—in the past, and is not being solved today, in thousands of villages and towns, by co-educational schools !

Everyone understands that the merging of boys’ and girls’ schools, now that they have been in existence for years, is not the work of a day. In junior classes the merging can be carried out painlessly. It is somewhat more complicated in senior classes. And it is particularly difficult with adolescents, in classes 5, 6 and 7.

But is anyone studying the available experience of merging ? The RSFSR Ministry of Education would show the right initiative if it were to listen to the opinions of teachers at the meetings called for August. They have something to say to it.

Life, too, has a word to say to the Ministry concerning those measures that brook no delay.

It would be a good thing to thrash out here and now without the least delay the question of whether it could not be managed this very year for boys and girls to go hand in hand to the first classes in the town schools.

It will be a good thing if henceforward the erection of each new school building does not lead mechanically to a further splitting-up and segregation of schools regardless of the wishes of the people.

As for the transforming in big towns of seven-year co-educational schools into ten-year, the Ministry of Education grants its consent to this only on condition that they are transformed into segregated schools, as has happened for example in Voronezh and in Kuibyshev. The Ministry will do well to stop this practice.

The creation of a single system of education in towns and rural areas is an enormous and complex matter. It must be approached after proper consideration of all the details and correct appraisal of the order in which this great task is to be carried out.

But to make a start on the performance of this task is, however, essential. Life says so.

From LITERATURNAYA GAZETA, August 6, 1953 (No. 93).

III

THE COMMISSION REPORTS

An interview with the Vice-President of the Academy of Educational Sciences

IS separate education for boys and girls, which exists at present in several of our large cities, desirable? This is a question which in recent years has been causing a great deal of worry in Soviet public life. The overwhelming majority of teachers, parents, writers, Party and Komsomol workers who have taken part in the discussion of the question in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* have expressed the opinion, on the basis of their experience, that co-education is the most favourable form for the normal school. What is the viewpoint of pedagogical theory?

Professor M. Melnikov, Vice-President of the Academy of Educational Sciences, told our correspondent:

"In 1953 the Academy set up a Commission, which has during the year made the most careful study of the work of co-educational and single-sex schools. The Commission included specialists in educational theory, headmasters and headmistresses, and teachers. The Presidium of the Academy has recently discussed the report of the Commission.

In studying ten years' experience since separate education was introduced, the first noticeable thing is that up to this day it has not been possible to define in any convincing and clear form the specific peculiarities in content and method of teaching in boys' and girls' schools respectively. No such methods, distinct from those practised in co-educational schools, exist. Nor could it be otherwise. The physical differences between, and peculiarities of, boys and girls call for no difference whatever, from the teacher's point of view, in their syllabuses (apart perhaps from some small difference in physical training). The data of psychology also completely deny the existence of any serious differences between boys and girls in the main psychical categories (will, attention, memory, and so on). This is the real reason why all attempts to build up differentiated syllabuses for boys' and girls' schools have broken down in practice.

The study of the working of boys' and girls' schools gives no grounds for speaking of the advantages of separate education as compared with co-education. On the contrary, upbringing in single-sex schools has been shown by experience to involve considerable difficulties and to have substantial defects. Comparative data accumulated as a result of serious study convince one that education in the co-educational school does not encounter such serious difficulties as in the single-sex schools. Indiscipline among the pupils, when it does appear, is not so marked or so widespread. The collective of pupils lives in greater harmony.

When the system of separate education was being introduced, some teachers expected there to be an essential difference between boys and girls in out-of-school activities. These expectations were founded on the belief that boys were more inclined to the exact sciences of mathematics, physics, chemistry and natural history, and that therefore the boys' school would develop out-of-school technical activities and mass sports on a bigger scale. There were attempts to assert that the capacity of boys in the sphere of technical knowledge was superior to that of girls. These suppositions, which have nothing scientific about them, have been completely exploded in practice. Take one fact to illustrate this. In the last educational year, in the boys' schools of the Kirov district in Moscow, one hundred boys out of 2,500 failed in chemistry, while only ten girls failed out of 3,700 pupils in the girls' schools. Many such facts have been collected. In the girls' school practice

has shown that in the sphere of technical creative work girls are no less successful than boys.

The successful organising of out-of-school activities does not depend on any particular quality characteristic either of boys alone or of girls alone. Nor are there any essential differences between the single-sex and the co-educational schools in organising physical training and mass sports.

In the co-educational school common work and common interests help to strengthen comradesly relations between boys and girls. No such basis exists in single-sex schools.

A scientific analysis of the extensive material gathered by the Commission convinces us that there is now no justification for the existence of single-sex education. In our country the aims and objects of the training and education of young people of either sex are the same. All our schools without exception have the same syllabuses and text-books and use the same forms and methods of education and upbringing, and there are no grounds for considering the existence of single-sex schools desirable. It is a gap in the unified Soviet system of schooling and therefore should be eliminated.

At the session of the Presidium of the Academy of Educational Sciences all the speakers were unanimous in supporting these conclusions of the Commission, and the Presidium agreed with them.

The Academy has also worked out practical proposals for the reintroduction of universal co-education. We consider that in the next educational year children of both sexes should be accepted in Class 1 of both boys' and girls' schools, from within the natural radius of territory covered by the schools, and should be taught together. Pupils in Classes 2, 3 and 4 should be brought together from the beginning of the educational year. All newly built schools should take in pupils of both sexes from Class 1 to Class 10. Pupils in Classes 6, 7 and 8 should be brought together in the same class at the beginning of the 1955-56 educational year, as this will require particularly careful preparation.

The Academy of Educational Sciences is passing on all these conclusions and proposals to the Ministry of Education in the Russian Federation."

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Primary and secondary schools are under the authority of the Ministries of Education of their respective Union Republics.

SOVIET EDUCATION

Bulletin

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SOVIET MUSIC TODAY

Georgi Keldysh

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THE musical public in London knows the work of a number of outstanding Soviet composers. The works of Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Khachaturian, Kabalevsky and others have been published and performed with success more than once in Great Britain. In talking with representatives of the British musical world I was able to convince myself of their lively interest in the work of these composers and in recent events in Soviet music generally. In the following pages I shall try to satisfy that interest to some extent, and to deal with some of the more important changes in Soviet music which, as I think, have occurred during the last three or four years.

I should like to begin my short survey with those who have left us. Soviet music has suffered two heavy losses. In 1950 Nikolai Yakovlevich MYASKOVSKY died in his seventieth year, and a little more than a year ago Sergei Sergeievich PROKOFIEV passed away. Both of them were great masters whose activity represented an entire epoch in the development of modern Russian music.

Myaskovsky was known above all as an outstanding master of symphony. The main and most important part of his creative legacy is the twenty-seven symphonies written by him during his forty years of composing. The characteristic feature of his creation is its great seriousness and concentration of thought. He always strove to embody profound and important ideas and experiences, taking as his model the works of the great classical composers of the past. He declared his creative credo in his article *Chaikovsky and Beethoven*, written as long ago as 1912. In this memorable essay he underlined the importance of these two composers as the greatest of symphonists, for whom the symphony was not an artificial formal scheme but a means of expressing in music a complete and integral outlook upon the world.

Myaskovsky strove to apply this concept of symphonies in his own creative work also. He was not always completely successful in this. Some of his works suffer from excessive introspection and a subjective isolation of expression, which imparts a sullen and monotonously gloomy colour to the music. But in course of time he overcame this "unsociability" and achieved an ever greater emotional directness, simplicity and clarity of style. Myaskovsky's last symphony, the twenty-seventh, is a worthy completion of the long and complex path followed by the composer in his creative search.

He was never able to hear this symphony performed by an orchestra: it was his posthumous gift. The music enchants one with its deep sincerity, the nobility of its expression, its vivid national colour, and the melodic beauty of its themes. It is not without its moments of concentrated and profound meditation and dramatic excitement, but its general character is one of light, of optimism and affirmation of life. This, as it were the farewell greeting of the departing composer to the new young life unfolding around him, mingles the grief of parting with the glad consciousness that life is inexhaustible and no one can arrest its advance to light and happiness.

It was not only as a composer that Myaskovsky played an outstanding part in Soviet music. He was active on a wide cultural field as teacher and trainer. As a professor at the Moscow Conservatoire for many years, he brought into existence a large school of composers, many of whose representatives are now themselves important and recognised masters of their art.

Prokofiev died while still at the height of his creative powers, not yet sixty-two years of age. In spite of a painful illness he continued to work with unflagging intensity to the very end of his days. Only a few hours before his untimely end, on March 5, 1953, he wrote the last lines of the ballet *The Stone Flower*, from one of the lays of the Urals by Peter Bazhov. The subject, one popular among Soviet readers, is a fairy tale of the remarkable art of the old Urals artisans who cut from stone the most extraordinary and fantastic works of art. In the clear, melodious and haunting music of the ballet, the composer succeeded in conveying the poetry of the Russian people and the fascinating and fantastic beauty of the mountainous Urals. The ballet was successfully produced at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, not long ago.

In the last years of his life, Prokofiev composed a number of important works of different types, representing a valuable contribution to the development of Soviet music. Widespread tributes have been paid in many countries to his oratorio, *In Defence of Peace*, in which the composer sought to reflect the aspirations of progressive mankind in our day to peace and friendship between the peoples. Here Prokofiev was particularly successful in the images of youth, tender but full of strength and hope, instinct with warm lyric feeling. One of the best examples of Prokofiev's lyrical work, winning in its purity and chaste restraint, is the *Cradle Song* in this oratorio, which has become very popular in performance by the talented Soviet singer Zara Dolukhanova.

Similar youthful freshness and healthy directness inspire the music of Prokofiev's Seventh Symphony, written in the last year of his life. In this symphony one finds the continuation of the best aspects of Prokofiev's early creative work. Some of its episodes involuntarily remind one of the sparkling vivacity of the *Classical Symphony* from which it is separated by a period of thirty-five years. These images of the composer's youth reappear here in a new form, however, far profounder and richer. Side by side with its effortless and vivacious cheerfulness the symphony contains the elements of deep meditation and wise contemplativeness. In its internal structure and in its place in the composer's creative life, it may be to a certain extent compared with Myaskovsky's Twenty-seventh Symphony, for all the difference in personality between the two authors.

Prokofiev also continued till the end of his life to work at one of his greatest operatic productions, *War and Peace*, from Tolstoy's novel. The first version of this opera was composed during the second world war and was produced by the Maly Opera Theatre, Leningrad, in 1947. The author himself remained not entirely satisfied, however, and decided to introduce a number of changes. These took the form of a greater accentuation of the popular and patriotic element in the subject of the opera, the enriching in melody of the vocal passages, and finally a certain compression of the action, giving it greater dramatic purpose and unity. The final judgment on the results of this refashioning will become possible after our opera houses have produced *War and Peace* in its new version. In any event it is one of the most monumental and significant in concept of the operatic works of our times, and is of outstanding artistic interest.

Unfailing and intense interest, but also heated and sharp disputes, are aroused by the work of Dmitri SHOSTAKOVICH, who works hard and very fruitfully at burning themes of the present day. Such of his works as the *Song of the Forests* oratorio, which sings the heroic creative work of the peoples of our country, the songs from the films devoted to the struggle for peace throughout the world, and so on, have also won wide popularity. Shostakovich has in recent years written a number of substantial compositions in the sphere of symphonic and chamber instrumental music. Among these I must mention the Fourth and Fifth String Quartets, the Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues for Piano, and particularly the Tenth Symphony. First performed in December

1953 by the orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic Institution, under the direction of Yevgeny Mravinsky, the symphony was then repeated several times during the season just completed at Leningrad and Moscow. The public greeted this new and outstanding work by one of our most prominent composers very warmly. It bears the impress of mature talent and depth of thought, although serious critical remarks have also been made about it. Its music impresses one irresistibly with its force of emotional expression, acuteness and vividness of dramatic contrast. Not without justification, many listeners and critics found in it echoes of the fearful tragedy experienced by mankind in the late war, the dread shadows of which have not even yet completely disappeared. As a whole, however, the symphony emerged somewhat uneven and unbalanced, yielding place in sense of finish and completeness of concept to (for example) the same author's Fifth Symphony. It suffers from an absence of melodic simplicity and breadth of inspiration, sometimes owing to the somewhat dry graphic quality of the music. In spite of its internal contradictions, Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony represents an event of outstanding artistic importance, and I do not doubt that it will be greeted by audiences abroad with the same lively interest as our Soviet audiences display.

Some months ago the musical public of the Soviet Union cordially celebrated the fiftieth birthday of the talented Armenian composer, Aram KHACHATURIAN. His music, which conquers one by its tempestuous vitality, its richness of colouring, its wealth of melodies and rhythms, has won a very wide and firm popularity. Recently Khachaturian completed a large new work, the musical part of the ballet *Spartacus*, from the novel of that title by Giovanioli, founded on the history of ancient Rome. It is now being prepared for production by the Kirov Opera and Ballet Theatre, Leningrad, under the direction of the well-known Soviet choreographer Igor Moiseyev. A preliminary acquaintance with the scenario and music of this ballet gives ground for expecting it to make a vivid and attractive production. The composer and the choreographer, working in close creative co-operation, have striven to produce a monumental heroic ballet filled with the pathos of the struggle of an oppressed people for its human rights and for liberation from the shackles of slavery. Khachaturian's music is peculiarly successful in its depiction of large mass scenes full of movement, energy and dramatic expressiveness. At the same time the composer has successfully created a number of sharply defined and brilliantly characteristic dance episodes providing a lively and varied background for the action. The score of the ballet is distinguished by the temperamental quality, vividness and fiery glitter usual in Khachaturian.

A leading position in Soviet music is held by Dmitri KABALEVSKY, whose creative work in these years has been most intensive. His opera, *The Family of Taras*, founded on Boris Gorbатов's novel, *The Unvanquished*, has been very successful. First produced by the Kirov Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, Leningrad, in 1950, this opera is now being produced in many cities of the Soviet Union. It displays with great dramatic strength the struggle of Soviet people against fascist occupation during the second world war and depicts the courageous patriot heroes who fearlessly sacrificed themselves for the independence of their motherland. The composer sensitively follows up the destiny of each of his characters (members of the family of the old workman Taras), showing how by different paths they all reach the same conclusion and become active fighters for the liberation of their native country from the yoke of occupation.

Interesting in concept is Kabalevsky's cycle of instrumental concertos, for violin, violoncello and piano, with orchestra. All three concertos are written with an eye on the young performer, and are distinguished by comparatively restrained dimensions and simple scores. In this connection I must mention the interest and attention Kabalevsky always shows towards the musical re-

quirements of young people. He has written many different works for children and the young, which enjoy much popularity among young Soviet hearers and performers. The types of pure poetic youth which invariably attract the composer have received delicate and sensitive embodiment in some of his larger works also. Particularly successful were the arias of the young heroes in *The Family of Taras*. For all their relative simplicity and accessibility, Kabalevsky's concertos cannot be classed as pedagogical pieces for instruction purposes; they are valuable works of art, with no less an interest for mature and finished virtuosos. The violin concerto, the most fresh and attractive of the three, is performed with success by such an outstanding master as David Oistrakh.

Kabalevsky has recently completed a new opera, *Nikita Vershinin*, from the play by Vsevolod Ivanov, *Armoured Train 1469*, in which are depicted events in the heroic struggle of our people for liberty and independence during the first years of the Soviet State.

Opera is tremendously popular in our country and beloved by the very widest mass of the people: it is therefore natural that most Soviet composers should devote so much attention to the operatic genre. Two considerable events in the musical life of the Soviet Union were the productions of the new operas *The Decembrists*, by Yuri SHAPORIN, at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, and at the Kirov Theatre, Leningrad, a year ago, and *Bogdan Khmel'nitsky*, by the Ukrainian composer, Konstantin DANKEVICH, at the State Opera and Ballet Theatre, Kiev, at the beginning of 1954. Both these operas reflect heroic pages in the history of the emancipation movement in our country. The second of them echoes the struggle of the Ukrainian people to throw off a foreign yoke and rejoin the brother people of Russia, in the seventeenth century. In *The Decembrists* the composer has sought to extol the generous heroism and courage of the patriots who for love of country ventured to enter upon an unequal struggle with the despotic Russian autocracy, and by their shots on the Senate Square in St. Petersburg on December 14, 1825, aroused a thirst for liberty in the hearts of many thousands of people. The very character of the subjects chosen for the two operas required for its fulfilment broad and monumental forms and a lofty passion in the musical intonation. At the same time their musical language has a marked singing quality and a vividly expressed national colour. Relying on the traditions of Russian classical opera, Shaporin and Dankevich have succeeded in creating truthful and exciting works about the past of their people which have won deserved recognition.

I should like in a few words to touch upon the gifted young composers who have grown up and reached maturity since the war. During these years there have appeared in Soviet music a number of interesting new names which have become well known to, and approved by, our audiences. Among these young composers there are representatives of various nationalities of the Soviet Union, basing themselves in their creative work on the foundations of their native culture, thereby introducing new and original principles into the general store of Soviet musical art.

In recent years there have been substantial achievements to the credit of the young schools of composers of Azerbaidzhan, which before the great October Socialist Revolution had no musical culture beyond that of unwritten tradition. The most mature and gifted among Azerbaidzhanian composers of the younger generation is Kara KARAYEV, already author of numerous symphonic and musical-theatrical works. His ballet, *The Seven Beauties*, on a subject drawn from national legend, produced last season in Baku and Leningrad, won success by the vivid colour and temper of its music. On the basis of individual episodes in the ballet the composer has produced a brilliant symphonic suite.

One of the most backward nationalities of the Russian empire used to be the Turkmenians. In Soviet Turkmenistan a highly developed national culture

has been formed, and scholars, writers, artists and musicians have grown up. Veli MUKHATOV, a young graduate of the Moscow Conservatoire, is now leading the development of Turkmenian national music. In his symphonic poem, *My Country*, he has enriched the traditional forms of Turkmenian popular music with breadth of concept, variety and vividness of colour, and has at the same time retained their national characteristics.

Among the talented representatives of the young composers of the USSR I must also mention the Armenian Arno BABADZHANIAN and the Georgians Otaro TAKTAKISHVILI and Sulkhana TSINTSADZE. Babadzhanian, himself an excellent pianist, attracted attention by the distinguished work of concerto type, for piano and orchestra, *Heroic Epic*. A pianoforte trio which he wrote later impresses one by its emotion and its dramatic quality. Taktakishvili has written two symphonies and an excellent piano concerto which have attracted the interest of the best Soviet pianists. Tsintsadze, working mainly in the field of chamber music, has written three string quartets, a cycle of pieces for viola and cello and other works distinguished by elegance of finish, delicacy of tone and sensitive reproduction of the characteristic features of Georgian folk music.

My survey is necessarily of a summary and hasty character, with no claim to be exhaustive. I think it essential, however, to dwell on one important sphere of Soviet musical creative work, even though briefly. This is the sphere of mass musical genres, and first and foremost of songs. It has latterly become a tradition among us to hold regular displays of the new achievements of Soviet music, timed to coincide with the annual or six-monthly meetings of the Board of the Union of Soviet Composers. The last meeting, held at the end of 1953, was specially devoted to questions of song writing.* Soviet composers have had noteworthy success in this field. The best Soviet songs are sung by millions of people all over the world, and play an active part in bringing together the masses of the people in the struggle for peace and friendship between the nations. The session was markedly self-critical in character, however, and in the main was devoted to bringing out defects and weaknesses. It was noted that by the side of attractive and energetic songs we have many which are feeble and colourless, and that some composers are insufficiently critical of the artistic aspect of the songs they write, and turn them out as from a fixed mould.

It is not only in the song-writing by our Soviet composers that these shortcomings are to be found. In spite of its undoubted achievements, Soviet music still lags behind the requirements of life and is poorer than everyday reality would justify. Hence even its best works are often subjected to sharp criticism and arouse heated argument. We consider that only in an atmosphere of free and unfettered discussion and direct open criticism and self-criticism, without fear or favour, can genuine great art develop. The basic requirement for the successful development of Soviet music is an attentive study of life by the composer, his constant and uninterrupted connection with the people, the audience for whom he is creating his works.

*For a detailed report, see SCR Music Section Bulletin, Vol. 1. No. 2 (Old Series No. 16), 1/6, post, etc., 3d.



Pickwick Papers.

Illustration by V. Milaszhevsky.

The 30th Anniversary of the S C R

THE Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR was formally constituted at a meeting in the Caxton Hall on July 9, 1924.

Mr. J. A. Hobson, the economist, in moving the resolution for the formation of the Society, stressed the importance of the study and comprehension of the culture of other peoples. He believed that the civilisation of the future could be built, not on the standardisation of life, but on diversity of national cultures, each making its own special contribution. It is in this spirit that the Society has always conducted its work.

Among other far-sighted and courageous men and women who took part in founding the Society were Professor L. T. Hobhouse (the first President), Mr. J. M. Keynes (later Lord Keynes), Mrs. Virginia Woolf, Mr. H. G. Wells, and Miss Margaret Llewellyn Davies, the first Chairman of our Executive Committee. They and other prominent British scientists, writers and artists, whatever their private political persuasions, realised the vital importance of promoting cultural exchanges with the great new civilisation developing in the USSR, since science and art in any country can only flourish on the basis of such international exchanges.

Then as now attempts were made to discredit and intimidate those who associated themselves with this effort by raising the political scare of "communism"; but since its inception the Society has firmly adhered to the opinion of its founders that it is perfectly possible for men and women of good will, of all political beliefs and of none, to co-operate in the non-partisan cause of improving cultural relations between Britain and the USSR, irrespective of the great difference in economic and political systems. One does not have to be a communist to appreciate Ulanova, Prokofiev or Tolstoy, and one need not be Liberal, Labour or Conservative to appreciate Margot Fonteyn, Vaughan Williams or Shakespeare.

As Professor Hobhouse said in 1924: "We refuse to let politics bound our horizon or its controversies limit our intercourse."

It is a fitting tribute to the memory and the foresight of the Society's founders that in 1954, its thirtieth anniversary, cultural exchanges are rapidly expanding, overcoming all obstacles and prejudices. We are delighted to welcome in Britain this year a record number and variety of distinguished Soviet guests.

During July we had the honour of presenting at the London Casino the Central State Puppet Theatre, directed by that genius Sergei Obraztsov, who had already endeared himself to the British public during his visit in November 1953. Another fine company of Soviet artists, the Beryozka Dance Ensemble, was presented by the British Soviet Friendship Society with great success at the Stoll Theatre in April. The three Soviet chess masters Bronstein, Alatorsev

and Tolush, who took part in the Hastings Tournament in January, afterwards gave a series of simultaneous displays arranged by the SCR Chess Section. In May the SCR Medical Section arranged a full programme for the USSR Deputy Minister of Health and three colleagues, who had been attending the Conference of the Royal Sanitary Institute in Scarborough. In June five Soviet educationists, led by Professor Goncharov, were the guests of our Education Section. They visited no fewer than sixteen different cities in Britain, in all of which they had discussions with British teachers, gave lectures and visited schools and other educational institutions.

All of these Soviet guests have been most warmly welcomed both by their professional colleagues in this country and by the British public in general. We are confident that those scientists, doctors and artists whom we have invited to visit Britain later this year will be received with equal warmth.

The Society has always believed that cultural exchanges must be a two-way traffic, and the number of British professional visitors to the USSR is no less impressive. For the first time since the war, British musicians have given concerts—and with great success—in Moscow and Leningrad, and the Society was able to arrange for Mr. Kenneth Wright, Director of Music of BBC Television, and Mr. Evan Senior, Editor of *Music and Musicians*, to accompany the artists on their concert tour. We are confident that as a result of this visit there will be a great improvement in relations between the British and Soviet musical world. In September, a representative group of lawyers will visit the USSR, under the leadership of our chairman, Mr. D. N. Pritt, Q.C., and in the same month twenty distinguished medical men and women will go to study the Soviet health services, at the invitation of the USSR Ministry of Health.

In addition, VOKS has invited the Society to send a mixed party in August, and the Academy of Sciences has invited a small group of British historians. Our friends in VOKS and other Soviet organisations deserve our warmest thanks for their generous invitations and the wonderful hospitality which they always extend to British visitors. These fruitful exchanges will help to break down the barriers of misunderstanding, prejudice and ignorance which have divided professional people in Britain from their colleagues in the USSR. It has always been the view of our Society that specialists in a given field are able to bring real and full appreciation to the problems of specialists in their own field in another country, and that it is a short step from this appreciation to a full and lasting friendship.

Side by side with the expansion of direct exchanges, the Society has considerably expanded its work of providing objective information about all aspects of Soviet science and general culture. In this thirtieth anniversary year we have begun to issue in printed form the quarterly Bulletins of our three largest Sections, Education, Medical and Science. This has resulted in a considerable increase in their circulation, including orders from all parts of the world; this indicates what great potential interest there is in translations from Soviet professional journals.

We have also improved the content and regularity of our mimeographed Section Bulletins. It is our constant aim to expand the size, appearance and scope of all these publications, so that in addition to the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL* there is a steady flow of information about new developments in each speciality in the USSR. The Society is also increasing the number of printed booklets on various aspects of Soviet life; this year we have already published *Ulanova on Soviet Ballet*; *Architecture and Building Technique in the USSR*; and *Obraztsov's Puppets and the Puppet Theatre*.

When the SCR moved to new premises in Kensington Square in 1947, one of the most urgent reasons for the move was the expansion of the Library and Exhibition Department, which had overflowed into all the other rooms in the old premises at 98 Gower Street. Now once again the Library is overflowing.

and we have been obliged to undertake major structural repairs to the house because of the weight of books and journals.

The SCR Library is generally acknowledged as one of the most valuable centres for information on the USSR in this country, regularly receiving over 150 current Soviet journals. In the first quarter of this year alone it dealt with nearly 500 inquiries and issued over 1,000 books and journals on loan. This compares with just under 1,000 loans in the whole pre-war year 1938-39. It is an interesting fact that the Library is now dealing with as many inquiries about the USSR as in the year 1941-42, when, of course, public interest in Soviet affairs was at its height because of the war. A list of those who have sought the aid of the SCR Library would read like a combined directory of British learned societies, public and educational bodies and research organisations.

The Exhibition Department has supplied hundreds of schools and educational bodies with visual aids of all kinds, as well as arranging exhibitions for a great variety of public functions. It is our aim to develop still further the Library and Exhibition Department as key centres for information and research on all aspects of Soviet life.

The expansion of the work of the Society during the thirty years of its existence has been accomplished in the face of very great difficulties and obstacles. For their efforts in helping the Society to overcome those difficulties I should like in particular to express appreciation of the wonderful work of our chairman, Mr. Pritt, the Editor of the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*, Mr. Rothstein, and our former secretary, Miss Judith Todd. For nearly twenty years, despite numerous other commitments all over the globe, Mr. Pritt has been an unfailing source of inspiration, wit and wise leadership. Mr. Rothstein was one of the earliest members of our Executive Committee, has been largely responsible for the great progress made by the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL* and our other publications, has helped the Society in innumerable ways and has always been a gold-mine of information and ideas of invaluable help to our work. Miss Todd worked devotedly and extremely effectively for fifteen years to build the Society, carrying the full load of responsibility during the most difficult period of the war and of the "cold war", and successfully developing many new spheres of activity, including most of our professional Sections.

Outstanding individuals, however, no matter how hard-working, would not, of course, have been able to achieve results without the support of hundreds of other members and friends, all of whom deserve our thanks. Now, more than ever, we need their help. We still have many weaknesses to overcome. We cannot possibly be content with our relatively small membership and the small circulation of our publications. A substantial increase will only be possible with the help of all our friends.

Let us celebrate our thirtieth anniversary by rapidly increasing the membership and resources of the Society, that it may play its full part in strengthening cultural relations with the USSR and establishing unbreakable ties of friendship between our two great peoples.

Christopher Freeman.

SOVIET SCIENCE

Bulletin

Vol. 1, No. 1. Mechanisation of Underground Coal Mining.

Vol. 1, No. 2. USSR Academy of Sciences Report 1953.

Each 1/6 (post. etc., 3d.) or 6/- annually post free.

PREPARING THE ELEVENTH SOVIET TRADE UNION CONGRESS

A brief survey

THE Eleventh Trade Union Congress of the USSR was held in Moscow from June 7 to 15, forty-three trade unions, grouping 40.4 million trade unionists, being represented. The following is a summary of the preliminary campaign, essential to have in mind when considering the proceedings of the Congress.

THE decision to convene the Congress, published on January 10 by the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (CCTU), gave the agenda as follows: (a) Report by the CCTU ; (b) Report by the Auditing Committee ; (c) Report on Rules Revision ; (d) Elections.

Delegates were to be elected at the Congresses of affiliated unions, by secret ballot, on the basis of one delegate for every 30,000 members, with a further delegate for 15,000 or more members above a multiple of 30,000.

The Rules Revision Committee of thirty-nine represented a variety of trades and many different parts of the country, from the Karelo-Finnish Republic to Uzbekistan. Eight were women.

A timetable was laid down according to which the annual general meetings of trade unionists in factories and offices, with election of new committees, were to be completed by February 5. District, town, regional and similar conferences of individual unions, to hear reports of outgoing committees and elect new ones, were to be completed by March 6 ; regional, territory and republic conferences on an inter-union basis were to be completed by April 4, with election of the appropriate trades council in each case ; and finally, All-Union congresses of the forty-three affiliated unions were to be held by May 4.

The effect of this method of procedure was to ensure a thorough discussion of trade union experiences, from the bottom upwards, before the All-Union TUC assembled.

As usual when the attention of the Soviet people is being concentrated on elections, the pre-congress campaign was conducted not merely as an examination of work done or of resolutions for the future, but also as part of the drive on the two main internal questions which have been concerning all Soviet citizens—the production of more consumer goods, in order to make everyday life easier ; and the expansion of the area under crops by many millions of acres in the course of the next few years.

On January 9 *Trud* (the TUC daily paper) published a report on both these subjects made by Mr. N. M. Shvernik, President of the Soviet TUC, at the Central Council of Trade Unions a fortnight before. In this report, after summarising the tremendous programme involved, he had given a critical survey of what the various trade unions had done—and still more of what they had not done—to play their part in the national effort. He gave a number of examples of good and bad work at the machine and tractor stations—the State-owned machinery depots which service the collective farms, and which are inevitably the main “outpost” of trade unionism in the countryside, apart from the State farms (whose workers are also wage earners and therefore organised in the Union of Workers and Employees in Agriculture and State Purchase). Shvernik gave critical attention to the work of this union in campaigning for good living conditions for the tens of thousands of workers who have

gone to the virgin soil areas in the last six months ; and also to its shortcomings in organising better methods of work.

Many other trade unions, however, are also involved in the two campaigns, and Shvernik dwelt in detail on their activities—for example, the Transport and Heavy Engineering Workers Union and the Engineering Union, which organise the workers on whom depends the fulfilment of machinery orders placed by agriculture ; the Timber and Paper Workers Union and Local Industry Workers Union, which organise workers engaged in producing building materials essential for the new tractor stations, collective farms and State farms in the vast areas now being opened up for agriculture ; or again the Union of Workers in State Trade and Public Catering, and the Union of Co-operative Workers, which are concerned in the campaign to improve the working of shops, canteens and restaurants, thus ensuring that the rapidly expanding mass of consumer goods reaches the public as rapidly as possible and with the best possible service.

Shvernik pointed out that January and February would be months when collective agreements at the factory level would be concluded for 1954. The trade unions, from top to bottom, ought to take advantage of this to raise to a much higher level the interest of trade unionists in every side of the life of their union, and in particular to criticise shortcomings wherever they were found.

THE most outstanding feature of the campaign as it developed on this basis at the three preliminary levels—350,000 factory meetings, 19,000 district conferences of individual unions, and 155 regional trade union conferences—was the tremendous intolerance displayed among the rank and file of anything savouring of complacency, sloth or bureaucracy among their selected representatives.

Here are a few examples.

“Delegates of the recent annual general conference of the Novaya Ivanovskaya Textile Mill” (one of the largest factories in the great textile centre of Ivanovo, where the first Soviet in Russian working-class history was elected in 1905) “when electing their new factory committee, did not nominate the former chairman, Konovalova. Nor were the majority of the other members of the outgoing committee nominated either. Why did the workers refuse them their confidence ? Delegates at the conference criticised the factory committee most of all for its formal attitude in leading socialist emulation. The workers gave undertakings, but no one took any interest in how they were being carried out. Results of the emulation were summed up only by chance. In some departments a considerable number of the workers were not drawn into emulation at all. And this was not accidental. The factory committee knew little of what was going on in the different shops, and did not rely on active trade unionists in its work. Savelyeva, a weaver, expressed the general opinion when she said that the factory committee took no interest in the work of the shop committees, their sub-committees or the shop stewards. It did not hold meetings of the activists or give them instruction or training. It was not surprising that the majority of them were almost inactive. . . . In forty-five trade union groups” (bodies of twenty or more trade unionists grouped together because they work on the same job, or on the same section) “social inspectors of labour protection had not been elected, and not everywhere were cultural organisers elected.” (These two types of voluntary worker should be elected, together with a shop steward and a social insurance delegate, in each trade union group.)

“The factory committee,” said another weaver-activist, Goguyeva, at the conference, “rarely asked for our help. Even when we ourselves offered it, we met with no response. That is the real reason why the committee has worked badly. You do not get results unless you rely on the active trade unionist.” (*Trud*, January 30.)

This was an example of bad work. Out of a number of examples of the opposite kind given by *Trud*, the following was published on February 3, a whole page being devoted to the work of one shop—the Drying Department—in the Voroshilov Combined Paper and Cellulose Works at Archangel. In this department there are about 350 workers, and the shop committee has succeeded in drawing 153, nearly half of the total, into active trade union work, performing one function or another on behalf of the union on a voluntary basis.

The social inspectors of labour protection, by adapting old and worn-out tyres for the purpose, managed to get a number of haulage trucks running in the works yard, thereby eliminating the laborious job of pushing heavy loads of paper and cellulose by manual effort from department to store. Members of the housing and welfare sub-committee, by timely approaches to members who had various small troubles at home (sickness, disrepair of their apartment, and so on), were able to get matters rapidly put right at the expense either of the management or of union funds, according to what was involved. The work of a number of shop stewards and dues collectors was quoted. It was noteworthy that the public activity of one young shop steward, Yevdokia Okeanova, had begun before she had been elected to any union job, when she acted as a sick visitor in place of the social insurance delegate in her group, who was on holiday. This started a range of activities which led to her being elected shop steward. The shop committee arranged a series of study courses for her and other young stewards, on such matters as the importance of dues collecting, how to organise emulation, the rights of trade union members, and so on. Later she was elected to the shop committee, where she acted as treasurer; a year later she was elected to the works committee, where she was made deputy chairman of the sub-committee for workers' supplies; and finally, still continuing to work in the shop, she was elected at the Congress of her union to the executive committee.

For reasons of space it is not possible to give detailed examples of similar critical examination at the regional, territory and republic conferences of the individual trade unions. Surveying the campaign on March 11, a *Trud* editorial noted that the delegates at these conferences had been particularly sharp in their criticism of shortcomings in leadership of socialist emulation, such as failure to acquaint factories in one and the same town or region with one another's achievements in improving production, introducing workers' suggestions, and so on. While many regional committees did a lot to improve living and working conditions through the medium of collective agreements, some were indifferent; thus the leaders of the Poltava regional committee of the Food Industry Workers in 1953 checked on fulfilment of a collective agreement only once, and only at one factory. "Regional, territory and republic committees are comparatively close to the factories. They must follow constantly the fulfilment of every collective agreement", wrote *Trud*. "With the help of the rank-and-file active trade unionists they ought to maintain unfailing supervision of housing construction, labour protection and welfare conditions, and insist on all promises on these subjects being carried out."

A frequent complaint at these conferences was excess of circulars. "The Archangel regional committee of the Timber and Paper Workers Union was generous in its issuing of instructions. Yet at the same time its chairman Strezhnyov and many others on the staff of the committee forgot the road to the lumbering jobs. What is the value of such leadership? It only disorganises the work of the job committees and diverts active trade unionists into filling up all kinds of forms", said *Trud*.

At the inter-union conferences, where trades councils at the regional or republic level were elected, one of the main points was the value of these institutions for spreading experience in improving methods of production and in social services for the workers. This was important, because these inter-

union bodies were brought into existence only some five years ago, as an experiment, in the larger towns and regions, and this was the first opportunity to judge of their usefulness.

The Moscow city trades council, for example, varied its activities from organising challenge competitions, between factories in the capital, in building greenhouses for vegetable growers in the collective farms, to arranging conferences of workers in different industries to study the methods of some innovator whose suggestion could be adopted in a number of branches of production.

On the other hand, it was criticised at its conference for not having once held a meeting of shop stewards or cultural organisers. (*Trud*, March 24.)

At these conferences, too, there was much ridiculing of bureaucratic methods : thus the presidium of the regional trades council in the Autonomous Republic of Kabarda (it has a woman chairman, by the way) took over 500 decisions in the course of 1953 but checked the fulfilment of only twenty-six of them.

ALL forty-three individual unions held their Congresses before the TUC and elected delegations to it.

The following is a list of these unions :

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Coal Industry Workers. | 17. Food Industry Workers. |
| 2. Metallurgical Workers. | 18. Local Industry Workers. |
| 3. Power Station & Electrical Workers. | 19. Co-operative Workers. |
| 4. Transport & Heavy Engineering Workers. | 20. Municipal Enterprise Workers. |
| 5. Engineering Workers. | 21. State Trade & Public Catering Workers. |
| 6. Railway Workers. | 22. Post, Telegraph, Telephone & Radio Workers. |
| 7. Chemical Workers. | 23. Agricultural & State Purchasing Workers. |
| 8. Building Materials Workers. | 24. Workers in State Institutions. |
| 9. Auto Transport Workers. | 25. Cultural Workers. |
| 10. Civil Aviation Workers. | 26. Medical Workers. |
| 11. Sea & River Transport Workers. | 27. Geological Prospecting Workers. |
| 12. Oil Workers. | 28—43. Sixteen Unions of Primary & Secondary School Teachers in the respective Union Republics. |
| 13. Building Workers. | |
| 14. Municipal Housing Workers. | |
| 15. Timber & Paper Workers. | |
| 16. Consumer Goods Industry Workers. | |

Delegates at these Congresses heard reports not only from their own Executives but also from the Ministers in charge of their respective industries on behalf of the Government. There was bold and unsparing criticism not only of the working of their Executives and of the Ministers but of the Central Council of Trade Unions itself—particularly in respect of bureaucratic methods of work. At the same time a picture of immense constructive, educational and defensive activity by the unions was revealed.

Thus at the educational workers' conferences it became clear that in scores of large towns the decision to raise the school-leaving age to seventeen had already been applied in 1953-54. In the coal industry, thanks to union efforts, mechanisation had reached almost saturation point, while the union had built 110 new miners' clubs and palaces of culture, and had under collective agreement promoted the building of more than 500 health and children's institutions for the miners. The chairman of the Co-operative Workers Union reported that about 4,000 shops and stalls, 3,300 canteens and about 1,000 snack bars had

been opened by the co-operatives at machine and tractor stations, as part of the drive to carry out the latest decision on expanding agriculture. The first Congress of Agricultural and State Purchase Workers revealed that there were now 6,000,000 wage-earners in Soviet agriculture (i.e. in State farms, tractor stations and purchasing organisations).

Electrical workers have over-filled their State plans in recent years and set going twenty-four new regional power stations, with 160 turbo-generators totalling about 5,000,000 kilowatts of power. In 1953 the Union of Workers in State Institutions held a total of 286,000 production conferences, at which employees of local Soviets, government offices, the courts, and so on, made 318,000 suggestions for improvement of public work so as to reduce red tape : 261,000 of these proposals had been adopted. In transport and heavy engineering output went up 12.7 per cent in one year, thanks to socialist emulation. At the Building Workers' Congress it was pointed out that productivity of labour is now nearly 32 per cent higher than it was in 1950 : four years ago 12-18 months were required to build a powerful blast-furnace, while now only 4-5 months are required. At the Municipal Housing Workers' Congress it was announced that powerful mobile mechanised house-building units have been moved into the countryside during the last twelve months : as a result, in the Russian Federation alone, 1954 is to see the building of 367 schools, ninety-four hospitals, sixty palaces of culture, and so on, in the villages. Local industry in the USSR—the factories owned by Autonomous Republics, Regional, District and Town Soviets—accounts for 50 per cent of all enamelled and zinc kitchen ware, half the felt footwear (for snowy weather) and 40 per cent of all clothing and knitted goods produced in the Soviet Union. At the Medical Workers' Congress Maria Iliina (Union Chairman and member of the delegation which visited Great Britain last November) mentioned that the number of hospital beds in 1953 increased by 60,000 and the number of places in sanatoria by 12,000.

But the main attention of these Congresses was directed to discussing not these and many other illustrations of progress which were brought forward, either in executive reports or by local delegates, but rather the defects which still exist.

Thus Iliina pointed out that there are still 10,000 vacancies for doctors in the countryside—not so much owing to shortage of staff as to unwillingness of many doctors to go there. One delegate pointed out that country districts in the maritime region of the Far East had long been pressing for more health workers of all grades. At Vladivostok there were more than 100 doctors of various specialities not attached to the health centres (polyclinics) and hospitals of the city. They were members of the union : but the regional committee of the union had not even attempted to persuade them to take jobs in the country. On the other hand, at the same Congress, delegates from both the Far North and the Caucasian Republic of Dagestan complained that, in spite of many promises, the Ministry of Health had not supplied village doctors with means of transport, and sometimes they had to travel scores or even hundreds of miles by begging lifts.

Gavrilshchuk, manager of a village library in Ukraine, said at the Cultural Workers' Congress : "Our village library at Veliko Bushinetsk, Nemirov district, Vinnitsa region, has 9,000 books—political, agricultural, fictional and other literature. Our library is used by 800 collective farmers of our village. You will find our books in every house. The demand for literature is growing. But unfortunately the library centres do not help us enough. Only about half the new books we ask for reach the village libraries. Yet at the same time they send us what so far we don't require. For example they sent us seven volumes of the music for Rimsky-Korsakov's operas. We haven't an opera yet in our district. And so I had to take these good books back to the library centre. Or

take the new cookery book. Half a million copies were published in 1952 and another half-million last year ; but we didn't get a single copy either in our village or even our district. When I was leaving for Moscow the collective farmers asked me to voice their demand for a new edition of this book, large enough for all the villages to get it."

At the Metallurgical Workers' Congress, Dubinin (a delegate from a Leningrad works) said : " In recent years many innovators have appeared in our industry as a result of emulation. You can see this from the report of the credentials committee as well. How many remarkable people, including young folk, are present at our Congress ! I am sure that in a few years' time the names of many of them will be known throughout the country. To help them to develop further is the duty of our trade union organisation ; and for that they need first of all to know the best experience elsewhere. But is this being done enough ? Unfortunately, no. Do even we delegates at this Congress know one another's work and successes ? We don't. The mass production department of the Union Executive ought to arrange regular meetings of our innovators in the industry."

Maria Partyka, caretaker in a block of flats at Lvov, said at the Municipal Housing Workers' Congress : " When the Polish landlords ruled our country I worked as doorkeeper for a rich man who owned not only his own houses but a furniture shop. We caretakers, stokers, liftmen were of no account. We were the last persons on earth. When Soviet power came things became quite different. We are equal citizens now. We are respected and valued. They elected me a deputy to the Soviet of Lenin Ward in our city and a member of the Regional Committee of the trade union. A caretaker at a health resort ! Could we even have dreamed about it in the old days ? Now it's a usual thing. Last year when I got my holiday I spent it in a rest home at Odessa. The union gave me a free place and paid my fare as well. Many other members had the same facilities. At first sight it might seem that a caretaker is a nobody, and not much importance attaches to his work. But this is only at first sight. It is we, if I may say so, who create the comfort of life. Our duty is to see that the house and the yard are clean and orderly. We've got machine-tool operators, teachers, and officers living in our house. The yard is clean and well cared for. When they go on holiday the tenants leave me the keys of their rooms because they are sure that everything will be safe. Many caretakers work in this way, but not all. Some of them are not conscientious about the work that has been entrusted to them. That means that educational work among caretakers and other service staff must be strengthened. This is very important. In our houses there are ' Red Corners ' where there are regular study circles and newspaper readings. But lately our City Soviet has been taking over the ' Red Corners ' for other purposes. For example, not so long ago, the ' Red Corner ' at Estate No. 11 was taken over for some office or other. And there are quite a few such cases."

An engineering worker from Leningrad, Farafonov, had this to say at his union Congress : " There has been a lot said here about Certificates of Honour. A Certificate of Honour is a political document. The important thing is to present it to the foremost worker at the right moment. This is of great educational value. But what happens in our union ? Some works committee awarded certificates to four young workers, but couldn't issue them : it had no blank forms. The chaps of course demand them. So we promise that if they only wait a little we'll get them soon from the Executive Committee of the union and hand them over. The boys waited and waited, and then the time came for them to be called up. They went off on their military service. Probably they are going to be demobilised soon and they'll come back to the works ; and so far we haven't had those certificates yet. We even have family troubles on account of this. A workman tells his wife that he has been awarded a Certificate of Honour, and she says : ' Show me '. But how are you to show her if you

haven't got the Certificate ? He begins promising, the same as we do : ' When it comes from Moscow you'll see it.' Then the wife gets tired of waiting, and she says : ' Until you bring that Certificate, better not show your face at home '." (*Laughter and applause.*) " I should like to put this question to our chairman, comrade Yeremeyev : How many high buildings have they put up in Moscow while you have been studying this question of Certificates of Honour ?" (*Laughter and applause.*) " Comrades, I have been chairman of my shop committee for eight years now, and well remember how in 1946 or 1947 our then union chairman, the late comrade Grankin, came to our works. He assembled the chairmen of all the shop committees, and had a talk with them. And it was good to be able later on to tell the trade union activists in our shop about our meeting with the union chairman. But now the present chairman doesn't even meet the chairmen of works committees. Couldn't you even have come to Leningrad to meet the trade union activists, comrade Yeremeyev ? And that goes not only for comrade Yeremeyev, but for all the members of the presidium." (*Applause.*)

In all some 2,000,000 members of trade unions spoke in these discussions. When the TUC assembled in Moscow on June 7, the real and basic problems of the Soviet trade union movement had been thoroughly thrashed out. The Congress itself was a close reflection of the movement as a whole.

Workers in agriculture accounted for 133 delegates, railwaymen 117, educational workers from the sixteen union Republics 99, medical workers 83, food industry workers 77, mass consumer goods industries 70, coal miners 60, cultural workers 60, and so on.

421 delegates were industrial workers at the bench—30.9% of the total ; 147 were engineering and technical workers from factories—10.7% ; almost as many, as mentioned, came from agriculture. Among the large number of cultural workers who were delegates were the president of the Academy of Sciences, the secretary of the Union of Soviet Composers and the chairman of the Union of Soviet Artists. Full-time trade union workers numbered 492. There were 532 women—39% of the total of 1,364 delegates. Nearly one-third of the Congress (433 delegates) were non-members of the Communist Party.

The opening report by N. M. Shvernik, chairman of the Central Council of Trade Unions, made a wide survey of the economic situation of the Soviet Union, of its problems and of the role of the trade unions. While echoing to the full the searching criticisms which had been made in the preliminary six months' discussion, Shvernik brought out a number of important events which promised success in overcoming the defects and difficulties. Thus he pointed out that in 1953 more than 900,000 suggestions by the workers had been adopted in industry, with the result that just under half of them had already, in the course of twelve months, brought about economies to the value of 4.4 milliard roubles. Shvernik laid emphasis on the need for further developing the system of production conferences in the factory, which in many places had become a field in which the workers most freely displayed their initiative and which thus became "a genuine school for the communist education of the masses". As one of the urgent needs in the sphere of wages, it was necessary (he said) to simplify the structure of the wage network in a number of branches of industry, which caused unnecessary complication, and moreover did not sufficiently encourage less skilled workers to improve their skill. At the same time he gave very many striking facts concerning the direct educational and training work carried on in the factories. In the Young Workers' Schools, where young people who left school at fifteen and went into industry can resume their education up to eve-of-university level, 1,300,000 are studying. As a good example of general cultural activity, Shvernik mentioned the "Krasny Proletarii" Works in Moscow, which has a functioning club, summer gardens with

open-air theatre and reading room, three libraries, twenty-two club rooms in the shops, a stadium, a wireless centre and a summer children's camp in the country for 1,600 children. The trade union clubs are themselves centres of educational and artistic activities of all kinds : in more than 9,400 of these institutions belonging to the trade unions, more than 123,000 amateur groups of all kinds were functioning in the spring of 1954, signifying that over two million trade unionists were engaging in study or artistic activities.

Although membership had increased from 28.5 millions at the tenth Congress in 1949 to 40.4 millions on January 1, 1954, there were still many workers unorganised—20% in agriculture and 15% in the timber and paper industries, for example. Shvernik stressed the tremendous part played in the life of the Soviet trade union by the voluntary activity of its members—the million and more shop stewards and the many millions of other activists (members of the different sub-committees, of factory committees, delegates of the trade union groups in the factory, and so on). Of the 420,000 factory and office committees of the Soviet trade unions 97% worked without any paid functionary. The trade union budget proper (based on a membership due varying from under $\frac{1}{2}$ % to 1% of wages) amounted in 1954 to about 5 milliard roubles, while social insurance funds (provided by managements as a statutory percentage of their total wages bill, but *without* deduction from wages) amounted to nearly 25 milliard roubles (these figures were given in the Auditing Committee's report, supplementing that of Mr. Shvernik).

Shvernik concluded his report with a brief account of the international relations maintained by the Soviet trade union movement. Since 1949 the Soviet Union had been visited by 463 workers' delegations from sixty-two countries, while 269 Soviet trade union delegations had gone abroad. Twenty-three workers' delegations had come from Great Britain, and seventeen delegations had gone to the United Kingdom from the USSR at the invitation of individual British trade unions. Shvernik stated : "The resumption of the activities of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee would undoubtedly correspond to the vital interests of the working people of Britain and the USSR." On the subject of the American-Soviet Trade Union Committee set up in war-time, Shvernik expressed his regret that it was not developing, and prolonged applause greeted his remark : "The Soviet trade unions always considered and consider today that the friendship of the working-class of the Soviet Union and the United States of America is a vital necessity for the interests of the peoples of our countries and for the consolidation of peace throughout the world."

See articles on Trade Unions in our issues Vol. XI, No. 1 ; Vol. XII, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 ; Vol. XIII, Nos. 1, 2, 4 ; Vol. XIV, Nos. 2, 3.

SOVIET MEDICAL

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THE ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL

E. A. Kosminsky

USSR Academy of Sciences

I ALWAYS await with interest each fresh number of the ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL. This magazine performs a very useful, important function; it offers its readers objective information on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from science, education, art and literature to the social and economic life of the Soviet Union.

My own speciality naturally makes me most interested in the historical, social and political articles appearing in the journal. Such articles appear quite often. The first that I would like to touch on here is an article by R. W. Davies, published in the winter 1951-52 issue (Vol. XII, No. 4), reviewing the discussion on the periodisation of Russian history conducted on the pages of the Soviet journal *Voprosy Istorii*. The author examines this discussion against the background of the development of Soviet historiography, with which he reveals himself well acquainted.

Mr. Davies correctly evaluates the struggle of Soviet historians against the vulgarisation of Marxism peculiar to Pokrovsky's "school". Following the defeat of this trend, he points out, Soviet historical science advanced at a rapid pace. He mentions a large number of valuable studies and publications, but considers the new and fruitful solution of the cardinal problems of Russia's historical development, particularly the periodisation of its social and economic formations, the most important of the achievements of Soviet historians.

As a historian I, personally, would appreciate the publication of more articles dealing with Russian history and discussing in greater detail the varied and intricate problems which Soviet historians have already solved or are at present studying.

The account of archaeological organisation in the USSR, published in the autumn 1952 issue (Vol. XIII, No. 3), by the eminent British archaeologist Prof. V. Gordon Childe, was read here with particular interest.

The contributions by the well-known British psychiatrist Brian Kirman on Soviet psychology (Vol. XIII, No. 1) and Dr. Horace Joules on Soviet medicine (Vol. XIII, No. 2), I found extremely interesting although some of their points might perhaps be disputed.

In one of its issues (Vol. XIII, No. 4) the ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL published several articles on the Fifth Five-Year Plan of Development of the National Economy and Culture of the Soviet Union, presenting a serious objective analysis of the major targets in industry and agriculture, cultural development and further improvement of the standard of living of the Soviet people.

In his contribution to this symposium the British economist and historian Maurice Dobb convincingly shows that the distinctive feature of the new plan is the systematic development of all branches of the Soviet national economy with a view to raising the standard of living of the people. Mr. Dobb particularly stresses "the absence of any signs of the strain of war preparations in the plan".

The authors of the other articles cite facts and figures illustrating the scale of peaceful national economic construction in the Soviet Union and the substantial increase in consumption.

I think the ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL would do well to follow the symposium up with articles disclosing the deep human content of those figures and revealing the bearing the latest decisions, ensuring the further advancement of agriculture, and the production of consumer goods, could have on the expansion

of trade between our two countries, for this is one of the problems of Anglo-Soviet relations that is begging for solution.

By discussing the concrete measures British and Soviet organisations have taken or are planning to take in order to expand commercial relations, the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL* contributes to the development of economic relations between England and the Soviet Union.

The *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL* also shows appreciative interest in Soviet cultural life. One of its best issues, in my opinion, was that commemorating the centenary of Gogol's death (Vol. XIII, No. 2). Besides Soviet studies of Gogol it contained a brief but brilliant article by the famous British author James Aldridge, who attended the centenary commemorations in Moscow. A later issue (Vol. XIII, No. 3) presented a good selection of items from the Soviet press devoted to the Avicenna millenary celebrations in 1952.

The *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL* is performing a very important function in presenting a broad picture of the achievements of Soviet culture, which is socialist in content and national in form. It gave me pleasure to read the article by the British composer Bernard Stevens (Vol. XIII, No. 4), who visited the Soviet Union in 1952. Far from hindering creative work, Mr. Stevens writes, extensive criticism is only helping composers. Mr. Stevens visited the Moscow Conservatoire, where the students include young people of the various nationalities inhabiting the Soviet Union and notes that they make a deep study of their own folk music and that there was "no evidence of attempts to Russify their work".

Another useful activity is its publication of book reviews. Each issue carries reviews of a very wide range. Take the summer 1953 issue (Vol. XIV, No. 2) : it contains reviews of books presenting the statements of Marx and Engels on Russia and the Russian people, of books on Caucasian history and on Maxim Gorky, of a volume on the 1951 world chess championship, of a translation of a volume of essays on aesthetics by Plekhanov, and so on. This list alone shows the wide range of problems to which the editors of the journal and those British cultural workers who are among its active contributors give their attention.

The journal's serious approach to the assessment of books dealing in any way with the life of the Soviet Union or with Anglo-Soviet relations has found reflection, it seems to me, in the fact that it counts among its reviewers Prof. J. D. Bernal, D. N. Pritt, Q.C., Prof. Kathleen Lonsdale, Prof. L. S. Penrose and other distinguished British cultural workers.

As a Russian scientist and historian I wish especially to comment on Prof. Bernal's review of a book about the great Russian scientist Mikhail Lomonossov by B. N. Menshutkin. Prof. Bernal presents a profound analysis of historical phenomena and his review is of marked value in spreading the truth about the history of our culture.

It is clear from the latest issues of the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL* that cultural relations between the British and Soviet peoples are steadily growing stronger. And it must be admitted that much of the credit for this goes to the journal.

In conclusion I should like to wish the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL* still greater courage in tackling the different problems of the cultural relations between our countries. I would suggest that it gives its readers a still deeper picture of the various aspects of Soviet life and establishes still closer contact with Soviet scientists, writers and artists in its work on subjects of interest to both Soviet and British readers, that it might more effectively counteract all attempts to slander the Soviet Union and to sow mistrust among our peoples.

Abridged from VOKS Bulletin, 1, 1954.

Book Reviews

LYSENKO

Agrobiology. T. D. Lysenko. (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1954, 15/-.)

THIS book, a monumental work in every sense, is a full translation into English of the fourth (1948) Russian edition of a large selection of Lysenko's "essays on problems of genetics, plant breeding and seed growing," originally published over the years 1935 to 1948, to which have been added three more first published in 1950-52. There are nearly 600 pages of text with numerous clear illustrations, together with an annotated chronological list of the author's publications ranging through experimental papers, theoretical essays, conference speeches, instruction manuals and newspaper articles, which itself gives an illuminating picture of the man and his work. There is also an invaluable index covering fifteen double-column pages (including forty-nine page references to chromosomes).

In English-speaking countries the author has hitherto been much better known for his theoretical heterodoxy than for his practical achievements. His strongest opponents have not generally questioned the latter, nor his consequent popularity among collective farmers; and the limited number of his writings selected for previous publication in English have been those centred on the theoretical controversy. This was natural, but left too many with the impression of a somewhat nebulous connection between his theory and his practice, which *Agrobiology* now effectively corrects. It was suggested that his theory was merely tacked on to his practice, in the interests of politico-philosophical conformism, or alternatively of popularisation among peasants assumed to require simplified and even mystical explanations. But the author of *Agrobiology* emerges from its pages as a realist before anything: that, and not ignorance of orthodox theory, was clearly what chiefly distinguished him from his scientific opponents in the USSR and elsewhere.

The book is in fact one long illustration of Lysenko's well-known but ill-assimilated dictum: "A scientific handling of practical problems is the surest way to a deeper knowledge of the laws of development of living nature." His unique qualification is the scale on which he has tackled that double task; his unique opportunity has been the science-hungry, large-scale, socialist agriculture of this country. Sceptical comments from people who have not such experience and have not studied this in the

way this book now renders easy must remain rather irrelevant.

He puts the whole matter in a nutshell with a passing remark in *The Reorganization of Seed Growing* (1935), when speaking of a variety of wheat which he would have discarded on theoretical grounds but kept going because a respected colleague liked it: "For a good variety one can, and should, sacrifice a theory, if one wants a good theory." (Perhaps in Russian, too, there is a popular aphorism about strawberries and cream!) It is typical of the author that a lecture on *Organism and Environment* (1935) embodies a lengthy account of the problem of potato degeneration in the south and how it was solved. *Michurin's Theory at the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition* (1936) is a title which speaks for itself in the same sense.

At the same time the book does contain a number of mainly theoretical essays. Some have already appeared in English, notably *Heredity and its Variability* (1943), *The Situation in Biological Science* (1948) and *New Developments in the Science of Biological Species* (1950)* which has come in for a good deal of criticism in the Soviet Union. For those interested in specific references by Lysenko to Marxism, they will be found in the encyclopedia article *Vitality of Plant and Animal Organism* (1952) and in *Engels and Certain Problems of Darwinism* (1941). *Two Trends in Genetics* is the author's contribution to the 1937 Academy debate, in which N. I. Vavilov and H. J. Muller both took part. It includes an interesting critique of the classic work of Johannsen with beans, upon which the theory of the "pure line" was built. It also contains references to the 3:1 segregation ratio, and to genes, the interpretation but not the existence of which Lysenko contradicts. A main issue at the time was the usefulness of arranging for cross-pollination within the same variety of normally self-pollinating crops, which Vavilov and others denied on the grounds that the plants would all have the same heredity make-up. One can see how the theoretical controversy blew up in the first place: because Lysenko's practical use of such methods as intra-varietal crossing met with theoretical, blank opposition from the academic geneticists.

The central fact brought out by this book, that Lysenko's theories were dictated by observation and experiment and not from above, gives it an importance beyond the special field of biology. Wider recognition of that sort of fact—whether or not one agrees with all his conclusions—will

obviously make for improved cultural relations between the Soviet Union and the English-speaking world; the more so since the publication at this time, in Moscow, of an English translation of Lysenko's book is hardly consonant with the idea recently revived on this side, that he and his theories are due for an early eclipse in the Soviet Union. Both have been getting some criticism there recently; but they have been much too useful in practice for the impending eclipse to be anything but wishful thinking.

J. S. KENNEDY.

* See ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL, Vol. XII, No. 1 (Spring 1951).

WELL-DOCUMENTED BOOK

The Allies and the Russian Revolution. R. D. Warth. (Duke University Press and Cambridge University Press, 34/-.)

THIS book is clearly written and well documented, and the author (who "received his doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1949") treats his subject with the dispassionateness of a mathematician but at the same time writes with a lively and interesting style.

He rightly states that the Russian Revolution was "an upheaval of such transcending historical significance that it is scarcely yet understood even by those whose profession is the writing and teaching of history."

The "March Revolution" took the Allied Governments (Britain, France and Italy) completely by surprise. They sent a special mission to Russia (January 29—February 21, 1917) to find out Russia's war needs. The British section was led by Lord Alfred Milner, who in his report to the British Cabinet concluded that there was "a great deal of exaggeration in the talk about revolution, and especially about the alleged disloyalty of the army." Yet in less than a fortnight after the completion of the report the "March Revolution" was an accomplished fact and the Tsar was off the throne.

Dr. Warth demonstrates that from the beginning of the revolution the strong urge to the "Left" came from below, from the Soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers. It was they who terminated the rule of the Romanovs and who clamoured for peace.

Dr. Warth relates that the Provisional Government (which was formed from a Committee of the Duma) was recognised without any delay by the Allied Governments, whose one aim was to persuade the Provisional Government and the Russian masses to continue in the war. On the other hand, as the author states, the aim of the workers, peasants and soldiers was peace, bread and distribution of the land.

They had no interest in the war; to them it was a bloody quarrel between the governing classes of opposing capitalist states.

Dr. Warth deals at length with the Socialist and Labour representatives from Western Europe who visited Russia and who spoke to the workers and troops. They got a respectful hearing but they made no impression. Referring to the Belgian Socialist delegation, Dr. Warth relates:

"They made countless speeches to soldiers and factory workers in the course of visits to Moscow, Kiev, and the south-western front. Their total audience approached the one hundred thousand mark, a record which far surpassed that of the other allied missions. They were invariably given a cordial reception, for the name 'Belgium' evoked sympathy even in circles where that of Britain or France aroused only hostility, but the practical effect of such conscientious propaganda work must have been next to nothing."

The efforts of other similar delegations met with the same fate.

Regarding Mr. Arthur Henderson's visit, Dr. Warth wrote that he "met Cabinet Ministers, Soviet leaders, and diplomats. He addressed Soviet meetings in Petrograd and Moscow", but he failed, "like his predecessors, in the futile task of creating enthusiasm for the war where none existed."

Dr. Warth recalls the many appeals made by the Western Governments urging Russia to continue in and to put greater effort into the war, but all in vain. He writes:

"The Soviet gave these notes a cool reception. *Izvestia*, normally friendly towards Wilson, singled out his message for special criticism because of its 'nebulous and high-flown phrases', which seemed to imply that the desire for peace and socialist brotherhood was a result of German intrigue. 'That is not the kind of language with which to speak to democratic Russia', said *Izvestia*."

Kerensky's efforts were equally ineffective and a disillusioned Kerensky in after years complained:

"... the tried statesmen of the Entente regarded the leaders of revolutionary Russia as pleasant simpletons who were dying to pull the allied chestnut out of the fire of the world war, quite unselfishly, for the sake of their revolutionary ideals, as it were."

Kerensky allowed himself to be bullied by the Western representatives into the "July offensive". Dr. Warth relates: "The German general staff, which had for so long chafed under political restraint on the question of military operations against revolutionary Russia, gladly rushed up reinforcements for a counter attack. The

result was a catastrophic rout. Only a relative handful of troops remained to fight. The rest fled in disorder."

Dr. Warth deals at length and with effective documentation with the coming to power of the Bolsheviks and the Left Social-Revolutionaries, the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, the refusal of the Western Governments to recognise the Soviet Government, and the refusal of these Governments to promise military aid to the Soviet Government if the latter agreed to resist the renewed German attack, and finally with the repudiation of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty by the Soviet Government on November 13, 1918.

Two major facts stick out a mile from this narrative: Russia of the Soviets was not prepared to fight for imperialist war aim, but it was prepared to fight to the death in defence of the conquests of the "November Revolution".

W. P. COATES.

OXFORD SLAVONIC PAPERS

Oxford Slavonic Papers, vol. IV (1953). Edited by S. Konovalov. (Clarendon Press, pp. 158, 12/6.)

AMONG several papers dealing with Russia, past and present, in this annual volume, readers of the **ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL** will probably find Professor Konovalov's own contribution, *Anglo-Russian Relations, 1620-4*, the most interesting and solidly documented. It is a study of how the English merchants sought to facilitate their lucrative trade with Russia by dangling before the Tsar's advisers the promise of an offensive and defensive alliance with James I—which in reality James had not the least intention of concluding. Professor Weidlé, of the émigré Orthodox Theological Academy at Paris, makes a somewhat "unorthodox" recognition, in *Early Russian and Western Art*, of the fact—now firmly established by Soviet medievalists, to the great displeasure of many foreign would-be patrons—that Russian social, cultural and philosophical development in the Middle Ages proceeded on parallel lines to that of west-European peoples. It is a pity he cannot refrain amid so much that is sensible from the now grotesque assertion that Russia had no feudal system. Professor John N. Hazard would doubtless have been better able to deal with his subject, *Law and Tradition in the New Russia*, but for the stifling influences of the anti-Soviet irrationalism which at present continues to stultify intellectual activity in the United States.

A.R.

STALIN ON THE YEARS OF TRANSITION

Works, Vols. V and VI. J. V. Stalin. (FLPH and Lawrence & Wishart, 1954. 5/- each volume.)

THESE volumes cover the years 1921-23 and 1924 respectively—the years of transition from war Communism to the New Economic Policy and then of development in the direction of building socialism "in one country taken separately". Stalin's speeches, articles and letters of this period relate mostly to problems which arose from the partial revival of capitalism which took place under the NEP, including the discussion about what was to happen next—whether the Soviet republics could and should go forward to socialism or whether some other path must be taken. Now that the hoary old legends about Trotsky and his associates are being revived by certain writers for a generation to whom they are new, Volume VI comes very timely to hand, containing as it does Stalin's famous lecture: "Trotskyism or Leninism?" a masterly debunking of these legends when they made their first appearance.

The purpose of this review is limited to only one aspect of the rich and many-sided material included in the two volumes—to show how the development of certain important features of the national policy of the Soviet Communist Party and Government in 1921-24 are reflected in Stalin's works which belong to these years.

The period covered is the one in which the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed. Already in February 1921 Stalin, surveying the situation of the separate Soviet republics at the end of the civil war, was declaring that "in the present state of international relations, in the conditions of capitalist encirclement, not a single Soviet republic standing alone can regard itself as ensured against economic exhaustion and military defeat by world imperialism", and calling for the formation of "a close state union" of the Soviet republics (V, 22). The adoption of the New Economic Policy in March 1921 brought new reasons for establishing such closer unity—the growth of a new bourgeoisie both in the Russian and non-Russian areas called forth a need to counter disruptive nationalistic tendencies and to consolidate all the forces in all the Soviet republics which were interested in ensuring a socialist future for these republics. These internal factors did not make themselves felt immediately, however. It was not until the middle of 1922 that the idea of welding the separate republics into "a single union state" was put forward on mainly internal grounds, when leaders of the Government and Communist Party organisations in the Transcaucasian republics

lies, in the Ukraine and in Byelorussia began to advocate it. "None of our Soviet republics is in a position to restore its economy by its own unaided efforts." There was need for "permanently functioning Union bodies capable of directing the economic life of these republics along one definite road" (V, 141, 2).

Many complex and delicate questions had to be solved in working out the exact constitutional form to be assumed by the "single union state". It is interesting that Stalin was at first (in November 1922) opposed to the idea of a Soviet of Nationalities (V, 146). By March 1923, however, he had become convinced that such a body must be included in the constitution, as a guarantee of mutual confidence and understanding among the peoples (V, 193-4). "Unless we have this barometer, and people capable of formulating these special needs of the individual nationalities, it will be impossible to govern. . . . As yet we have no better way or means of creating an organ capable of registering all the oscillations and all the changes that take place within the individual republics than that of establishing a second chamber" (V, 263-4, 266). The proposal had originally been, however, for a Soviet of Nationalities which would function as an *upper* chamber, and this was not accepted. The two chambers of the central "Parliament" of the USSR—one elected on a population basis and the other representing the different nationalities—were to be co-equal, *each* having power to control the decisions of the other (V, 301, 332). Stalin also successfully opposed a scheme for *two* Presidiums to be elected, one by each chamber, instead of a single one elected jointly by the two chambers together (V, 302).

Another proposal put forward at this time which was rejected under Stalin's leadership was one to break up the Russian Federation so that its various units (e.g. the Tatar Republic) might enter the new USSR separately. To break up the RSFSR, he said, would go contrary to the movement for closer union, it would "upset the truly revolutionary process of union of the republics which has already begun" (V, 154-5). These proposals came from Rakovsky, Skrypnik and other persons, later exposed as conspirators against the Soviet order, who were at this time entrenched in the leadership of the Ukrainian Communist Party. They also tried, without success, to get the phrase "a single union state" struck out of the new constitution and to change the character of the USSR into that of a confederation (V, 343, 347).

In his struggle to ensure such a handling of the national question, in the new conditions, as would facilitate leadership of the entire country by the working class (still predominantly Russian, even in the

Ukraine—V, 49, 337), Stalin argued against the fundamental standpoint of Rakovsky (which was also that of Bukharin) on this question. Their line, he said, was to "exaggerate" the national question, to make it overshadow "the question of working-class power". They aimed to place the Russian workers "in a position of inequality in relation to the formerly oppressed nations". This could only tend to undermine the Soviet order, for "it is clear that the political basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat is primarily the central, industrial regions, and not the border regions, which are peasant countries". Moreover, "it should be borne in mind that in addition to the right of nations to self-determination there is also the right of the working class to consolidate its power, and the right of self-determination is subordinate to this right"—a point which should be remembered when "handing out all sorts of promises to the non-Russian nationalities, when bowing and scraping before the representatives of these nationalities, as certain comrades have done . . ." (V, 269-70).

While warning against dominant-nation jingoism among Russians and striving continually to improve educational and other institutions so as to give greater scope and dignity to the non-Russian nationalities, Stalin in this period never tired of reminding all concerned of the hard fact of actual inequality, actual backwardness of economic and social structure which no demagoguery or romanticism should be allowed to conceal if it were to be remedied in the only way possible. "Schools will not carry you very far. . . . The Russian proletariat must take all measures . . . to ensure the building of centres of industry in these republics"; and he mentions measures already taken (April 1923), such as the export of entire factories from Moscow to Georgia and Central Asia (V, 283). There was need for systematic assistance by the Russian workers to the non-Russian peoples (and its voluntary acceptance by the latter) "in their cultural and economic development, without which what is known as 'national equality of rights' becomes an empty sound" (V, 116). "The Party's task is to help the labouring masses of the non-Great-Russian peoples to catch up with central Russia, which has forged ahead" (V, 25); and for this, "real and prolonged assistance from outside", by the Russian workers, was necessary (V, 191. See also V, 35, 36, 39, 58, 59).

The actual backwardness of the non-Russian areas meant that there was, in most of them, "little or no industrial proletariat" (V, 25), which in turn meant that "in the national republics . . . Party membership is low generally" (V, 210. See also VI, 11). This situation obliged Russian Communists often to

undertake, in person and on the ground, much of the work of leadership in the non-Russian areas. "Since there is a shortage of local workers, it is obviously necessary to engage non-local workers for the work, people of other nationalities, for time will not wait; we must build and govern, and cadres of local people grow slowly" (V, 341).

In some of the border regions the victory and consolidation of Soviet rule had led to an "influx of petty-bourgeois nationalist elements into the Party for the sake of a career" (V, 29). NEP conditions strengthened their influence, which was expressed both in transforming the local Soviet authorities into *de facto* bourgeois governments (e.g. the situation in Bukhara described in V, 338, 9) and in an intensification of nationalism directed not only against the Russians but also against neighbouring weaker nationalities, e.g. Georgians against Ossetians (V, 192). This led in extreme cases to actual treason and conspiracy with foreign powers, especially where the ideas of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism gained a hold (e.g. Validov, Sultan-Galiyev and others in the Tatar Republic, V, 308sq.).

One of the principal methods of work used by the enemies of the Soviets, both internal and external, in the entire period since the end of the war of intervention, was the fostering of an attitude of "ourselves alone" in the border regions, an attitude of distrust or disregard for the Russian working people. Stalin always stressed the need to combat this tendency. Even the Russian settlers on the land in the border regions were not all kulaks, and the fight against the Russian kulaks in those areas must not be conducted on a basis of "Russians versus the rest"; the task of the Communists in places like Northern Ossetia and Bashkiria where there had been Russian colonisation must be one of uniting the efforts of "the labouring masses of these nationalities" with those of "the labouring masses of the local Russian population in the struggle for liberation from the kulaks in general and from the rapacious Great-Russian kulaks in particular" (V, 27).

Throughout these volumes, as everywhere in Stalin's works, we observe his high estimation of the capacities of the Russian working class, one of the fundamental elements in his thinking. In May 1924 he noted that Russians made up seventy-two per cent of the membership of the Communist Party (at a time when their proportion in the total population was about sixty per cent) and that "the proportion will evidently increase as a result of the Lenin enrolment"—the action of 250,000 of the most advanced non-Party workers in joining the Communist Party in the period immediately following Lenin's death, a rebuff to hopes expressed by enemies that this great loss would

weaken the USSR (V, 211). The socialist revolution had succeeded first in Russia not only because of factors arising from the country's backwardness, as some alleged, but also because it possessed "the most revolutionary proletariat in the world" (VI, 78).

The Trotsky faction derived all their arguments about the impossibility of building socialism in Russia ultimately from their "lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the Russian proletariat" (VI, 395). Their advocacy of solving the country's economic problems by means of mass "labour armies" under military discipline, instead of adopting the GOELRO plan for electrification, followed from their disbelief in the Russian workers' capacity to master modern technique (V, 50). It was not for the workers in general that they had this contempt, overtly at least: the workers "in other, more advanced, more civilised countries, will be truly capable of performing miracles", they said; but not the Russians. History has shown that better judgment of the capacities of the Russian workers was possessed by the Georgian who in 1926 reminded fellow Georgians "to whom I am obliged for my present position in our party" that it was in Petrograd, "in the circle of the Russian workers, the liberators of the oppressed peoples and the pioneers of the proletarian struggle of all countries and peoples", that he had become "one of the master workmen of the revolution" (*Reply to Greetings from Workers of the Main Railway Workshops in Tbilisi*, in Stalin's Works, Vol. VIII, Russ. ed., p. 175: English translation in *Labour Monthly*, December 1949).

BRIAN PEARCE.

NINE AMERICAN PAPERS ON SOVIET SCIENCE

Soviet Science: A Symposium. Ed. Ruth C. Christman. (American Association for the Advancement of Science and Bailey Bros. & Swinfer, 11/-.)

AT their 1951 meeting the American Association for the Advancement of Science held a symposium on Soviet science. The nine principal papers have now been published in the form of this book and the result is a very mixed bag. But before discussing the views of the theoretical analysts of Soviet science, let us quote another leading American who was concerned only with results. In flat contradiction to those who allege lack of intellectual freedom in the USSR and a consequent decline of their science, Mr. Sterling Cole (then Chairman of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee) said on October 12, 1953:

"So let us acknowledge the fact plainly: we still seem to underestimate the Soviets . . . we shall only delude ourselves if we conclude that the Soviet achievements have been due exclusively or even primarily to the revelations of traitors. . . . Primarily in other words. Moscow has mastered the intricacies of atomic and hydrogen energy so quickly because Soviet scientists and technicians are very good."

Within this book such a free acknowledgment is made only by John Turkevich for physics and chemistry, and by J. R. Kline for mathematics. Once we leave the physical sciences and come to the natural sciences, we meet the patronising attitude which persists into the general appraisal by Conway Zirkle. This consists essentially in saying that Russian science has a fine tradition; until the early nineteen-thirties it remained a part of world science, but then, alas, the Bolsheviks got hold of it. Now "the dead hand of orthodoxy" stifles its development. "We are all poorer", writes Zirkle, more in sorrow than in anger, "because Russian science has been injured by communism."

If the American people really accept this grotesque distortion of reality then, without patronage, we can truly say that they blind and impoverish themselves. Those who propagate it are poisoning international relations and misleading their own people.

There are some valid thrusts in this book. Quotations are given which seem to show foolish criticisms, failures to reply to correspondence and invitations, and decisions on scientific topics published with inadequate background documentation. These are legitimate criticisms, if substantiated, but the main picture presented is not a true one.

The writers have failed to grasp that scientists can be won over to the concept of science for the people; that there should be fundamental discussions of the theoretical bases of science; that party and people should take an intimate interest in and be involved in these discussions.

In fact, Soviet science is today thrusting forward in an atmosphere of intense vitality, amply nourished by massive reserves of eager young recruits and state provision of facilities. To the AAAS I would now recommend that they inform themselves and the American public by carefully reading Nesmeyanov's address on the tasks of the Academy of Sciences.* It would also be useful to have an understanding "outside" opinion on Soviet science. Unfortunately this American symposium did not provide it.

I. BERKOVITCH.

* See SCR Science Bulletin No. 4 (Old Series). Available from SCR, 1/6 (postage, etc., 3d.).

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- A BOOK FOR PARENTS. A. S. Makarenko. (*FLPH and Russia Today Book Club*, 3/6.)
- ANNA KARENIN. L. Tolstoy. (*Penguin Classics*, 5/-.)
- CATALOGUE OF DANCE FILMS. Ed. Peter Brinson. (*Dancing Times*, 2/6.)
- COLLECTIVE SECURITY IN EUROPE. (*Soviet News*, 1d.)
- EAST-WEST COMMERCE. Vol. 1. No. 2, April 1954. (*Foreign Correspondents Ltd.*, £5/5/- or \$16 annually.)
- EAST-WEST PASSAGE. Dorothy Brewster. (*George Allen and Unwin*, 21/-.)
- ELECTIONS TO THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE USSR. G. M. Malenkov, V. M. Molotov, N. S. Krushchov. (*Soviet News*, 1d.)
- ENGLISH. Spring 1954. (*OUP for English Association*, 5/-.)
- HEROES OF THE EMPTY VIEW. James Aldridge. (*The Bodley Head*, 12/6.)
- HITLER'S EUROPE. Ed. A. and V. M. Toynbee. (*OUP for Royal Institute of International Affairs*, 63/-.)
- HOW THE SOVIET UNION IS GOVERNED. V. Karpinsky. (*FLPH*, unpriced.)
- LEARNING TO LIVE. A. S. Makarenko. (*FLPH and Russia Today Book Club*, 3/-.)
- NEGOTIATIONS THE WAY TO PEACE. Jessica Smith. (*New World Review*, 25c.)
- NEW PATHS OF SOVIET SCIENCE. O. Pisarzhevsky. (*Soviet News*, 6d.)
- NINA. V. Dudintsev. (*FLPH*, unpriced.)
- OXFORD ECONOMIC ATLAS OF THE WORLD. (*OUP*, 30/-.)
- P.E.N. NEWS, No. 186, Spring 1954. (*English Centre of International P.E.N.*, 1/-.)
- POLITICAL AFFAIRS, May 1954. (*New Century Publishers Inc.*, 25c.)
- REJUVENATED WHEAT: HYBRIDISATION WITH COUCH GRASS. Academician N. V. Tsitsin, USSR Academy of Sciences. (*Penguin Science News*, No. 32, 2/-.)
- RUSSIA, POLAND AND THE WEST. W. Lednicki. (*Hutchinson*, 30/-.)
- STATEMENT ON BACTERIOLOGICAL WARFARE. (*Association of Scientific Workers*, 6d.)
- THE BERLIN CONFERENCE. (*Soviet News*, 1d.)
- THE HOOVER LIBRARY COLLECTION ON RUSSIA. W. S. Sworakowski. (*Geoffrey Cumberlege, Stanford UP*, 8/-.)
- WORKING CONDITIONS IN SOVIET INDUSTRY. (*Soviet News*, 2d.)
- WORKS, Vol. 7. J. V. Stalin. (*Lawrence and Wishart*, 5/-.)

SOVIET ATHLETES AT WHITE CITY

in October

FOR the first time it is hoped that Russian athletes will be seen in action in this country. They have accepted an invitation to take part in the inter-capital floodlit match which will be organised by the London clubs and sponsored by the "Evening News" at the White City on October 13.

Since the first Russian participation in international athletics in Oslo in 1946, they have gradually become established and confirmed their world standing by coming a very close second to the United States at the last Olympics. At present Russia holds nine world records and has three pending.

We now hear almost daily reports of their world class performances and it is most exciting news that we are to have a chance of seeing them in action.

Some of those we shall probably see at the White City are : A. Anufriev, who was third to Zatopek in the 10,000 metres ; Lituyev, who won a silver medal in the low hurdles at Helsinki and holds the world 400-metres hurdling record ; Bulanchik, who was fourth in the high hurdles ; O. Grigalka, who finished in front of Savidge in the shot, and Shcherbakov, world hop, step and jump record holder. Among the women are the Moscow student Aleksandra Chudina, who only recently beat Mrs. Sheila Lerwill's world high-jump record, and N. G. Otolenko, world record-holder for 800 metres.

SCR PROVINCIAL SECRETARIES

Readers of THE ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL may wish to get in touch with the Secretary of the local SCR Committee so that they may be kept informed of local SCR activities. The following list is appended for their convenience.

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NOTE

The contributor of the article *The Renaissance of the Dance*, which appeared in our previous issue, "V. Kamenev", is not a citizen of the USSR but a British subject of Russian extraction who uses this signature as his *nom-de-plume*.

SCR NOTES

LONDON MEETINGS AND OTHER EVENTS

April—June 1954

(All at 14 Kensington Square unless otherwise stated)

April

- 25th: RECITAL. CHAIKOVSKY'S *Queen of Spades*. Tape-recording of complete performance by the Bolshoi Theatre company.
- 27th: LECTURE. *The Historical Background of Russian Architecture*. B. LUBETKIN.
- 28th: SYMPOSIUM. *Recent Developments of Soviet Science*. Professor J. D. BERNAL. Professor J. C. WHITEHEAD, Dr. J. S. D. BACON, Chair: Professor K. LONSDALE. At **University College**.

May

- 6th: LECTURE. *Local Government in the USSR*. M. HOOKHAM.
- 13th: LECTURE. *Current Developments in Soviet Music*. Dr. Y. KELDYSH. *Lenin-grad Conservatoire*. Chair: Professor ALAN BUSH.
- 14th: LECTURES. *Prevention of Mental Illness in the USSR*. Dr. S. V. KURASHOV. *Legal Aspects of Soviet Industrial Medicine*. Professor L. K. KHOTSYANOV.
- 15th: FILM. *Baltic Deputy*.
- 25th: LECTURE. *Town Planning in the USSR*. F. P. TINDALL.

June

- 1st: FILMS (*Popular Science*). *Agricultural News*: *Crimean Botanical Gardens*: *Eclipse of the Sun*: *Moscow Zoo*: *USSR Today (No. 31) Newsreel*.
- 2nd: LECTURE. *Tenants Without Landlords—Some Problems of Soviet Housing Law*. D. VEALL.
- 13th: CHILDREN'S FILMS (*Colour Cartoons*).
- 16th: LECTURE. *Method and Content of Soviet Education*. Professor N. K. GONCHAROV. Chair: Dr. G. B. Jeffery, F.R.S. At the **Institute of Education**.
- 19th: LECTURE AND DISCUSSION. *Makarenko's Contribution to Soviet Education*. Professor N. K. GONCHAROV and other Soviet teachers.
- 24th: QUESTION AND ANSWER MEETING. *Soviet Education*. Professor N. K. GONCHAROV and other Soviet teachers. At **Caxton Hall**.
- 26th: SUMMER FAIR.
- 30th: MOSCOW STATE PUPPET THEATRE, directed by SERGEI OBRAZTSOV. At the **London Casino** for a four-week season of full-length plays.

PUPPETS
and
PUPPET THEATRE
By
Sergei Obraztsov

Illustrated

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